SERMONS FOR CRITICISM, BY WALDO FRANK

The Saturday Review of Literature

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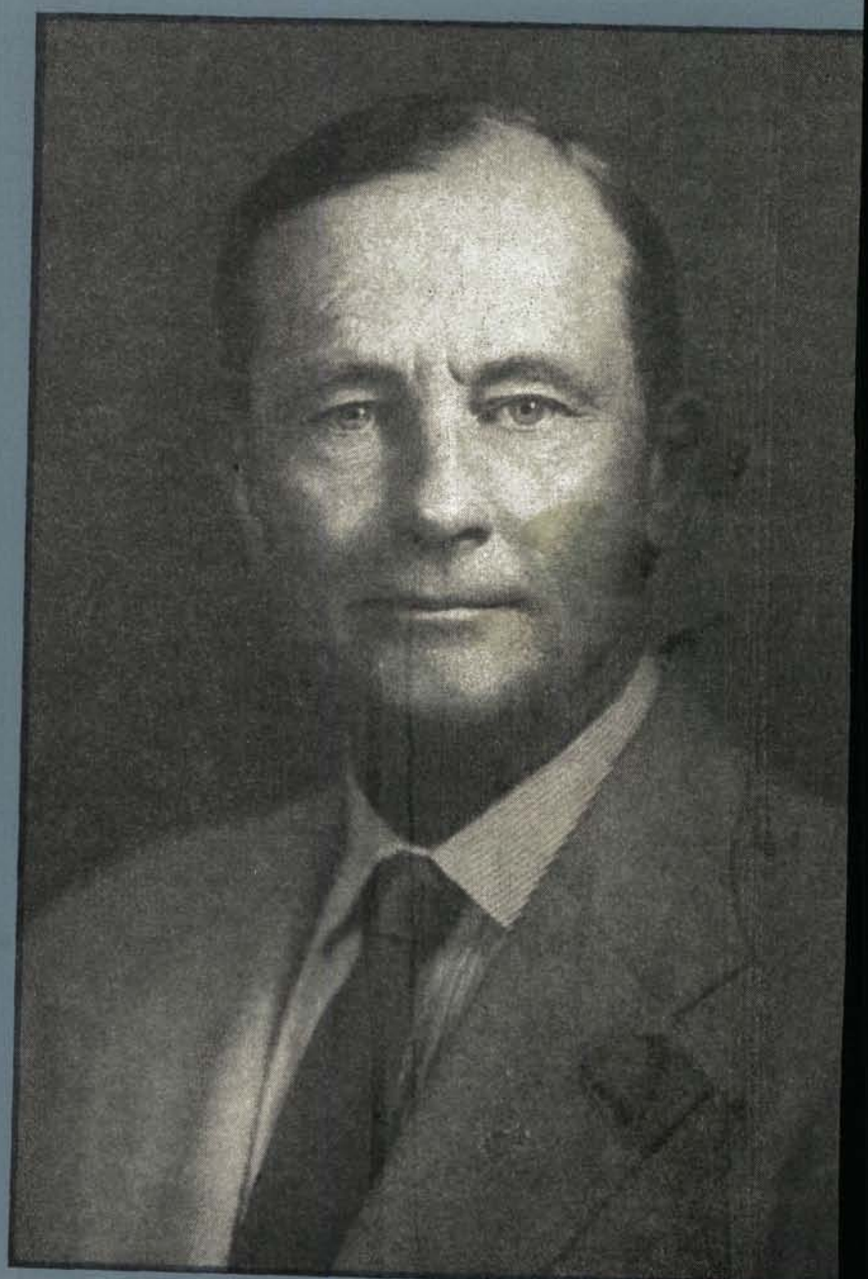

SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON's "Admiral of the Ocean Sea" is "equally distant from gushing exaltation and shattering skepticism." *(See page 5)*

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Sermons for Criticism

WALDO FRANK

IN September 1940, a "Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion in Their Relation to the Democratic Way of Life" was held in New York; and the opening remarks were intrusted to a literary critic. The gesture revealed a good sense of values: surely, the best man to integrate the problems and visions of the assembled scientists, philosophers, and theologians should be a man of letters. A year later, the same celebrated critic enlarged and included his report "On Our Literature Today" in "Opinions of Oliver Allston." The opinions of Van Wyck Brooks have now inspired one of those polemical flurries which periodically twitch the sleeping mind of intellectual America. In the exchange, less of judgments than of tempers, there is a lesson for us of deep meaning in this war which is only part of a world revolution.

I recall similar American battles of books: the Mencken vaudeville, the Mike Gold assault on Thornton Wilder, the Neo-humanist sessions which spoke not only articles but volumes, the campaign of our vulgar Marxists to equate literature with *agitprop,* etc. One trait, all these squabbles had in common: literature, not only as a revelation but as an *organ* of the human spirit, was not discussed; the protagonists as literary critics were moralists, sports-writers, politicians or (like Mencken) virtuosi on the cymbals. It was much like a football game in which the players tackle, rush, retreat—while the pigskin rots on the sidelines. Yes, there were always one or two men who had their eye on the ball; but neither the leading athletes nor the stadium had their eyes on *them.*

I propose very briefly to examine the significance, deep and crucial, of this American phenomenon. I read the book of Van Wyck Brooks, in which my friend gives permanent and delightful form to his opinions, with the respect and affection that I hold for one who has not only served American culture with his fertile thought but enriched it with the intrinsic beauty of his writings. Mr. Brooks disapproves of what he calls "coterie literature" because it lacks, in his belief, centrality of values, affirmation of life, an adult vision, a standard of health and harmony with the race's progressive urge; he groups in the guilty category Europeans like Mallarmé, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Joyce, and Proust, refugees from America like Pound, Eliot, Stein, and a few popular novelists like Hemingway, Wolfe, and Faulkner. Against these, he places—not the slim *central* vanguard of the Great Tradition here and abroad, but old writers of what he calls "primary literature": men like Erasmus, Dickens, Hugo, Dostoievsky, Tolstoy, Goethe, Whitman, Rabelais, and Mann—a hodgepodge of moralists, artists, prophets, innovators, and mere reflectors of popular trends, who have in common, so far as one can see, nothing but the fact that they are consecrated by conventional opinion.

The first point to note, is the vagueness of the critic's eyesight, which enables him in one embrace to adore Dickens with Dostoievsky, and in one blow to knock down a Gertrude Stein with Rimbaud or Proust. The second point is the incapacity of Mr. Brooks to recognize among contemporaries those very writers whose affirmative, adult vision diverges from the conventional forms of an exploded world in exact proportion with their receptivity and command of the fresh elements and substances of a world-in-the-making. Mr. Brooks's criticism of many of the moderns, insofar as he finds them jejune, adolescent, submissive to a passing chaos, is correct. But even here, the cultural critic invalidates his attack by directing it, as it were, "from behind"; by flogging the new men with elegiac reminiscence instead of drawing them out and forward with a constructive vision. The premise of good craftsmanship in art is that the materials must be sound; only poor workers can use at their face-value the pawed-over and decayed stuffs of an exploded age. Therefore, the first step of affirmation in such an age as ours will be the revealing of what is shoddy, and the search (leading often into neo-primitive forms) of what is valid. This *ABC* of the creative process, our dean of literary critics ignores. And despite his sociological competence, he fails to see the revolutionary content and form that creative affirmation *must take,* in an era of tragic transition from a world convulsed unto death to a world still inchoate. Therefore, even when Mr. Brooks is justly severe with fragmentary or shallow writers, his severity misses fire; it issues less from an objective understanding than from a mood, and is aimed more at satisfying a subjective temper than at affirming a deep and basic vision.

"The opinions of Van Wyck Brooks have now inspired one of those polemical flurries which periodically twitch the sleeping mind of intellectual America."

Something keeps this superb literary artist dimly focussed on an unreal past; this able social critic from a straight social view. We must find out what it is.

Perhaps a clue is in the other camp—that of the defenders of what Mr. Brooks assails. *The Partisan Review* in its last two issues has given a hearing to eight good Americans on the subject; and in its forthcoming number (March 1942), it will publish a reply by T. S. Eliot. Dwight MacDonald leads off with a ten-page essay whose title, "Kulturbolschewismus is here" reveals his message. Mr. MacDonald tells us that Mr. Brooks doesn't like all these writers because he's a bourgeois and they show up the bourgeois order—which is why Mr. MacDonald likes them and why they are "good

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writers." Mr. Brooks hits them over the head, because he's a counter-revolutionary; just as Mr. Stalin hit the good writers of Russia over the head because he is (in Communist disguise) a counter-revolutionary. Ergo, Mr. Brooks is a literary Stalin. And behold us! at the start of an American "amalgam" in which all our men of genius, like the men of Trotsky at the Moscow trials, will be shot at dawn.

Mr. MacDonald's argument is a flagrant example of the most popular literary figure of speech in these American polemics: the fallacy of the Undistributed Middle. Here it is in its pure form: "A horse has four legs, an ass has four legs; therefore a horse is an ass." Perhaps Mr. Brooks *is* playing into the hands of a future American bureaucracy who will employ his thunders against all dissident writing. The point is, that Mr. MacDonald says so without proving it. And my concern is why he does not prove it: why, instead, like Mr. Brooks, he calls names without specifications; why he indulges in vague sweeping statements without logic or literary focus—despite the fact that in other more honestly political phases of his writings, he reveals a clear hard mind. Mr. MacDonald ends by placing writers in two categories even more simplistic than those of Mr. Brooks. According to Mr. MacDonald, literature is response to a social order; and that's that. Since our capitalist order is bad, the good writers show it up; the bad ones affirm it. And Mr. MacDonald is quite sure that the real favorites of Mr. Brooks are the contributors of the *Saturday Evening Post*. In a word, he caricatures Van Wyck Brooks quite as savagely as Mr. Brooks caricatures Proust or Rimbaud. And he shows that he shares Mr. Brooks's failure to see the new synthesis in contemporary letters by calling Joyce, Elliot, et al, "the most advanced cultural tendencies that exist." This is, of course, not so. There are writers living today who, within the dissolution of old forms, go beyond transition figures like Joyce, Proust, and Mann, in the creation of new esthetic organisms, lyrical and architectonic, from which the new human order will be builded. To these, Mr. MacDonald is as blind as Mr. Brooks. Mr. Brooks flings his darts from an elegiac moralized past; Mr. MacDonald flings his from the same century's dogma of economic determinism. Why is this? But first, more evidence. . . .

In the issue of January-February 1942, *The Partisan Review* gives us the observations of seven prominent American writers. Mr. James T. Farrell leads with another F.U.M.: half the men Mr. Brooks loves were also attacked while they lived; *ergo*. . . . (Beethoven's music was called bad names; Smith's music is called bad names: ergo, Smith's music ranks with Beethoven's.) "The profound despair," says Mr. Farrell, "of men like Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Flaubert, was based on the collapse of bourgeois culture;" and thereby reveals that he stands with Mr. MacDonald, well entrenched in that eighteenth-century ignorance of man and of man's nature, whence issued the economic geneticism and the romantic psychology of the vulgar liberals and Marxists.

In contrast with this shallowing of art by the implicit denial that it has direct conduits to the *constant* in man's nature or that man's nature has dimensions deeper than the social-economic system in which the individual happens to exist, the vituperative rhetoric of Henry Miller—that belated anarcho-Bohemian—is at least amusing, although scarcely instructive. Louise Bogan also is so entirely remote from the realm of general ideas that she at least spares us bad ones. William Carlos Williams in his good lyrical homespun manner talks sense:

> What the heck does Brooks think the boys are talking about these days in the poorly heated rooms? Does he think it is any different from what he was thinking, at his best, when he was young? It's different, all right, because the age is different but in its essence it is just as *right* as his highest conceptions. The only difficulty is he has lost his power to recognize it.

But with John Crowe Ransom we bump into another world of meaningful confusion. Mr. Ransom's diagnosis of the disorder of our literature is to call it a "crisis of language and expression." So it is. But his cure is to apply "pure science" to a scrutiny of prosody technics. I do not deny the use of such minutial work by future literary critics with organic vision. But the realm of literature is man's basic relations with Reality . . . in self, society, and God. Since the classic forms in which this Reality was expressed have broken (they were already challenged long before the industrial-capitalist era), of course there is a crisis of language and expression. To believe, however, that a million years of scientific method can *directly* lead to the establishment of new valid relations with Reality is to ignore the nature of both art and science. Any good scientist could assure Mr. Ransom that the realm of science is neither Reality nor man's relations with Reality; but the classification, motions, and relations of arbitrarily discrete objective forces within Reality. Any good scientist, knowing this, is better qualified as a literary critic than Mr. Ransom.

Both Allen Tate and T. S. Eliot accept, at least, that the basic tragedy of human life, with which high litera-

(*Continued on page* 17)

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In the Wake of Columbus

ADMIRAL OF THE OCEAN SEA. A Life of Christopher Columbus. By Samuel Eliot Morison. Maps by Erwin Raisz, Drawings by Bertram Greene. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. An Atlantic Monthly Press Book. 1942. 2 *vols.* $10. 1 *vol.* $3.50.

Reviewed by LEONARDO OLSCHKI

FIFTY years ago the discovery of America seemed to be one of the greatest achievements of human genius. In its vicissitudes of grandeur and misery, of hard struggle and good fortune, the life of Columbus appeared a colorful and heroic symbol of human destiny, embodiment of the most decisive event in modern history.

But during the last half century a disruptive and industrious criticism has demolished this brilliant personality piece by piece and transformed the figure of Columbus into a man of low competition, towering passions, turbid intrigues, illiteracy, and quixotism. The distortion of the traditional figure of the Admiral was brought about by depriving the contemporary documents of their authenticity and by substituting for their actual evidence the trumped up disclosure of the secret motives, sinister machinations, and occult influences supposed to have inspired and directed the conquest of the New World.

Chauvinism, racialism, and scepticism contributed towards disfiguring entirely an heroic image already disintegrated by an inextricable and vexatious "Columbus Question" which diverted the interest of scholars from more essential historical problems. Meanwhile, more or less conscientious authors misled the public with fictional and arbitrary interpretations of facts.

Professor Morison's monumental biography appears at this critical moment in the posthumous life of the Admiral. It is a work of historical clarification and of artistic reconstruction, equally distant from gushing exaltation and shattering scepticism, the scholarly and literary embodiment of that constructive common sense now so rare that it may rightly be considered a form of genius and the intellectual complement of decency and integrity.

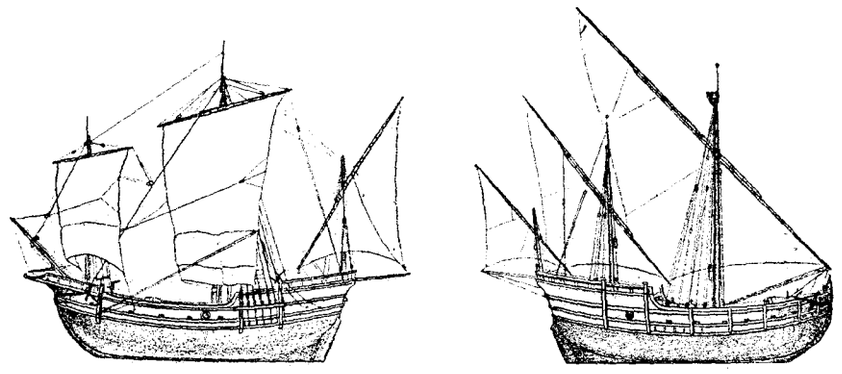
The two ponderous and elegant volumes are not devoted to the defense of a new thesis. They contain plain history, dignified, substantial, sometimes humorous, always free from the dialectical tricks and oratorical gesticulations characteristic of most of the recent literature on Columbus. This detailed and extensive historical work has been created by a painstakingly scrupulous scholar who is at the same time an experienced navigator and a consummate artist provided with an uncommon power of suggestive imagination. His seaward approach to the problems, events, and characters of the great drama of the Admiral's life is original, daring, and successful.

The readers of his work will easily overcome any initial reluctance to enter the Admiral's caravels which are described in the first chapter devoted to "Ships and Sailing." Putting to sea with Commodore Samuel E. Morison in command of the fleet, and provided by him with a series of excellent maps, they will feel at once in the right place for the exact appreciation of the achievements of Columbus and of the intentions of his biographer. He reveals in this unobtrusive and pertinent way the bright and vast horizons from which he considers and describes the personalities and events connected with the discovery of America.

From now on stars and waves, currents and clouds, tides and sea-routes never drop out of sight throughout the pages of these two volumes. The purifying blasts of the oceanic winds and the gentle breezes of the tropical regions pervade the whole succession of continental, insular, and nautical episodes of Columbus's dramatic life. Examined in the light of Mr. Morison's experience the Columbian documents reveal, with a fresh expressiveness, both the bright and shady sides of the adventurous enterprise. Before the majesty of nature, in the immensity of an uncharted ocean and of an undisclosed continent, the true measure is found for the appreciation of human greatness and for recognition of its counterpart in failures and weakness.

This is the natural and historical scenery of the new tale of the Admiral's life. Every episode of it is introduced by a suitable Biblical quotation taken from Columbus's writings. Thus the vision of the Ocean and the words of God which inspired the initiative of the discoverer now constitute the intimate structure of his biography.

Thereby Columbus appears again, and definitively, in his natural and spiritual environment as a mighty historical personality who succeeded in imposing his will on kings, notables, priests, and sailors, sometimes on professors, but never on the mob of adventurers and criminals who finally caused his ruin. He succeeded in overcoming the reluctance and the hesitations of his contemporaries as long as he could enchant them with the imaginary wonders and riches of Asia or inflame their hearts with the promise of vast political and religious conquests.



—From the models after the D'Albertis plans, in the Marine Museum, Pegli, Genoa.
The *Nina* before and after re-rigging.

Columbus was a conqueror who realized his gigantic ambitions in a militant spirit of confidence and devotion, with an irresistible power of imagination and with an uncommon nautical skill. Every aspect of this magic personality, every episode of his eventful life, and every problem connected with his experience has been considered in this new biography.

Morison's work is at the same time exhaustive and stimulating, a coherent and attractive narrative of fundamental and episodical events but also a source for new historical problems and a starting point for new investigations.

A grand scholarly achievement and a masterpiece of American literature, this work will constitute the classical biography of Columbus.

The one volume edition of "Admiral of the Ocean Sea," to be distributed by the Book-of-the-Month Club, is substantially identical with the longer work except that it does not contain the extensive notes and much of two highly technical chapters.

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Flight of the Spirit

FLIGHT TO ARRAS. By Antoine de Saint-Exupery. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc. 1942. $2.75.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THIS new book by the author of the highly poetic "Wind, Sand and Stars," is, of course, written in prose. But it is a poem, and I am right to call it a poem. It is a poem because of its overtones and undertones, of its phraseological agility, of its emphasis on mood, of its sensitiveness to impression and of its mystical depth. To the unimaginative it will simply be the story of a sortie over occupied France by a certain air-man of an already beaten air force, above roads swarming and cluttered with fleeing refugees. But even the unimaginative and the dull, if they once begin this book, will be caught up in a flight not only of an airplane but of a spirit, which becomes toward the end the veritable spirit of Man. Here is a new burst of living thought, to shake the profit-nursing mind of peace.

Saint-Ex of Group 2-33 goes into the major's office from a room he has been dreaming of as a boyhood schoolroom, to get his assignment for a sortie. Before his take-off he believes he is "dressing for the service of a dead god." Everything has caved in, everything is futile now, France is beaten—is fighting on simply "so that war perhaps may be good enough to agree to look like war." The terrible apathy of defeat is over all.

Saint-Ex, and Lieutenant Dutertre the photographer, and the gunner, climb into the plane. Then for about one hundred and sixty pages you have an account of the sortie, high altitude and low altitude, in those wide spaces where seventeen of twenty-three crews of the group had vanished before. You have it in meticulous description of just what the pilot does and how he feels, of the number of instruments on the instrument board and how the oxygen-feed works and what is said through the inter-com.; and you have it in the memories, ruminations, and dreams of the pilot himself. There are certain lines of the text that the artist Bernard Lamotte has illustrated with delicate draughtsmanship; and the translation by Lewis Galantière appears to preserve every nuance of the author's style. One is vividly present on the flight. The throttles freeze, and the rudder. One floats in a void, entirely at the mercy of enemy planes.

Description and discussion of the jammed roads below, of the terrible hordes of refugees, goes to the core of the great overthrow. How those stricken patient hordes were used by the enemy as a new weapon, against an army drowned in them as in a tidal wave, is made poignantly plain. And never in a book that I have read on this war has the whole overhanging pall of defeat, clogging action as in an evil dream, been more impressively drawn. It is done almost with gestures of trance; the weariness, the incoherence, the futility. . . .

The pilot began his flight as a bitter stoic. He ends it a man transformed. For as he descends from the height of sky to fly at last "drowned in a crop of trajectories as golden as stalks of wheat" viewing "vast packets of smoke and steel moving soundlessly upward and behind me with the lingering flow of icebergs," comes the recognition:

> Man ceases to be concerned with himself, he recognizes of a sudden what he forms part of. If he should die, he would not be cutting himself off from his kind, but making himself one with them. He would not be losing himself, but finding himself. This that I affirm is not the wishful thinking of a moralist. It is an everyday fact. It is a commonplace truth. But a fact and a truth hidden under the veneer of our everyday illusion.

There is also a rejection. "I reject non-being," asserts the flier. "My purpose is to be. And if I am to be, I must begin by assuming responsibility. Only a few hours ago I was blind. I was bitter. But now I am able to judge more clearly." Later: "I understand now for the first time the mystery of the religion whence was born the civilization I claim as my own: 'To bear the sins of man.' Each man bears the sins of all men."

"Somewhere in the north of France a boot had scattered an ant-hill and the ants were on the march."

Homing to the group, after a cataclysmic experience over burning Arras, that has passed almost with the motions of some daemonic ballet of the skies, the pilot has more to say concerning communion with men in comradeship, communion with Mankind. Some of his observations dig deep into the reasons for the self-accusation of modern civilization. Men, for one thing, had forgotten each other as inheritors of God. Some piercing things are said: "There is no savour like that of bread shared between men." "One victory exalts, another corrupts. One defeat kills, another brings life. Tell me what seed is lodged in your victory or your defeat, and I will tell you its future." "A cathedral is a good deal more than the sum of its stones. It is geometry and architecture. The cathedral is not to be defined by its stones, since those stones have no meaning apart from the cathedral, receive from it their sole significance."

Thus the writer grapples with conceptions that arise from a long and close contemplation of mankind in defeat, of human suffering and disaster. He has been brought to a new realization of the sacredness of man. He announces a new belief. He will continue the fight for a civilization that "possesses the power to bind into its unity all diversity without depriving any element of its individuality." He accepts no defeat. Arras has unsealed his eyes.

I said this book is a poem and I quote the following passage to show further in Saint-Ex's' own words what I mean:

> All my tanks had been pierced, both gas and oil. Otherwise we seemed to be sound. Dutertre called out that he was through, and once again I looked up and calculated the distance to the clouds. I raised the nose of the ship, and once again I sent the plane zig-zagging as I climbed. Once again I cast a glance earthwards. What I saw I shall not forget. The plain was crackling everywhere with short wicks of spurting flame—the rapid-fire cannon. The colored balls were still floating upward through an immense blue aquarium of air. Arras was glowing dark red like iron on the anvil, a flame fed by subterranean stores, by the sweat of men, the inventions of men, the arts of men, the memories and patrimony of men, all these braided in the ruddy ascension of that single plume that changed them into fire and ash, borne away on the wind.
>
> Already I was flying through the first packets of mist. Golden arrows still rose and pierced the belly of the cloud, and just as the cloud closed round me I caught through an opening my last glimpse of that scene.

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Ramsey . . .

FIRE IN SUMMER. By Robert Ramsey. New York: The Viking Press. 1942. 266 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BESS JONES

IN its remarkable technical excellence, its singleness of impression, and its compelling narrative push, Mr. Ramsey's first novel easily outdistances the work of many already established writers and creates a precedent for himself he may find it hard to match next time. His achievement seems all the more notable in view of the familiarity of his material. The peripatetic existence of the poor white tenant farmer and the misery brought on his family by his losing struggle with himself and his environment have provided the theme for more recent Southern fiction than one can readily recall. In some respects Mr. Ramsey's book resembles the best of it. It opens, for example, in much the same way as "The Time of Man" with a picture of an itinerant farm family sitting in the midst of its wagonload of pitiful household goods surveying a likely looking place to stop a while. The fanatical will of Mr. Ramsey's Spence Lovell to surmount a hopeless situation recalls Paul Green's excellent, too little-known "This Body the Earth," in which, likewise, defeat owes less to outside forces than to inherent defects of character. For comparable treatment of violence, sadism, and the terrifying lengths to which the maniacally possessed may go, one naturally turns to the creator of "Sanctuary" and "The Hamlet," though "Slogum House" and "The Ox Bow Incident" prove that Faulkner and the South have no monopoly on the bases of degenerate behavior.

Despite such similarities, however, Mr. Ramsey differs essentially from these writers in purpose and tone. He is neither so lyric as Elizabeth Roberts nor so much concerned with the relationship of man to the soil. Paul Green's story offers a larger setting, a more evenly balanced weighing of the individual's struggle with the external forces he is combatting. The milieu itself becomes a protagonist. With Faulkner brutality and malevolence seem almost ends in themselves rather than accompaniments of moral conflict. Mr. Ramsey, on the contrary, portrays with pity, though without a touch of sentimentality, a cruel, fanatically hating man—a ruthless husband, a brutal father, and a menace to the peace of his neighbors. But he shows Spence Lovell for what he is—a mentally sick man, with the deep and awful sickness of one who demands a scapegoat (in this case the Negro) to avoid facing his own inadequacies, and who, still without surcease, must push on to always wilder excesses until he is destroyed. The significance of the theme goes, as we all know today, immeasurably beyond the problem of the tenant farmer in the South.

Ward Moore

The story of the Lovell family is told and never departs from the point of view of Blue Lovell, the older boy, who brings to it that impression of accurate recapturing of detail and incident which distinguished "How Green Was My Valley." Nothing he could not have observed himself is allowed to appear, yet the implications of every closely watched gesture, expression, mood, and episode are everywhere made clear to the reader. And though the manner of telling is forthright, almost taut, Mr. Ramsey happily avoids that false staccato sentence structure which has become the accepted mannerism of reporting through juvenile eyes.

Mr. Ramsey displays a rare gift for choosing a theme and developing it with economy, precision, and intensity; for dialogue with the authentic flavor of its section and its social levels; for comic anti-climax; and for understanding of human conduct, both normal and pathological. He appears to have made a long, sure stride into recognition without ever having had to crawl.

W. Colston Leigh, lecture manager, has acquired assets and interests of the Columbia Lecture Bureau. The transaction is effective immediately and the arrangements for all lecturers already booked, as well as all future inquiries concerning engagements, and will be handled through the W. Colston Leigh offices. Approximately 100 authors and speakers are on the Columbia Lecture Bureau List, including Clare Booth Luce and W. L. Shirer.

Moore . . .

BREATHE THE AIR AGAIN. By Ward Moore. New York: Harper & Bros. 1942. 445 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

WARD MOORE is a writer of uncommon interest, as his first novel very plainly shows. It is about what most good first novels have always been about; it is, in Wolfe's phrase, a legend of man's hunger in his youth. This hunger for life, this seeking for experience, half in desperation, half in ecstasy, is the first meat upon which writers feed, and only the thoughtless will complain of its recurrence as a literary theme. The materials may recur—first love, first friend, first bitterness—but there will always be as many varieties of perception, of coloring, as there are men; the same notes, maybe, but a fresh tune coming out of them. That is the best part of this book. The world of Simon Epstein is made of all the elements we know so well, America between Coolidge and Depression. Looking for a job, losing it, finding another, the factory, the strike: these are the known. But add to them the fresh catalytic element of a central personality with the vigor of life in him, and they seem now to rearrange themselves and to stir with immediacy.

Simon is not a big character, not very imaginative or ambitious or articulate, no Gant. But he is none the less a unique and matchless atom of his society, partaking of its restlessness, cutting his swathe. His hungers are sharp and urge him forward, half way across the country, in search of a world to live in. He meets with people and circumstances of all kinds, and we should say that of the two it is the people who come off second best. Moore says in an afterword, perhaps a little too proudly, that "making an accurate facsimile from life is a task beyond my powers." This is true; it is beyond his powers. And he will not be a better writer than he is until that power too is his. The studies of the rich employers, for example, the Sentrys and the Hammels, are flat and lifeless, and such caricatures as the polysyllabic hobo professor are irritating. Why could he not have been a more real figure? The book rests upon Simon for its reality, upon what happens to him and inside of him. We shall look, in a next book, for an expansion of focus.

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Suckow . . .

NEW HOPE. By Ruth Suckow. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1941. $2.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD A. CORDELL

THIS new novel by Ruth Suckow, her first in eight years, suggests that the brilliant and prolific new school of Iowa writers is going to encounter real difficulty in dethroning her from her position as the first novelist of the Midlands. In "New Hope" she ignores all the tricks and devices that go into the making of a novel and deliberately makes her task hard. There is no plot, only the faintest excitement, no irony, no satire, no pathos, no sentimentality; there are no contrivances or manoeuvres to propel characters through enough experiences to create what is usually considered a novel. What remains? Miss Suckow has created her small world and peopled it with entirely credible Iowa folks.

Miss Suckow's many readers will be delighted to find in her new novel that what was good in her earlier books is now even better; but they will also find that what they missed in "The Folks," "The Kramer Girls," etc., she still refuses to supply. Her Iowa county is as authentic as Jane Austen's shire or Sarah Orne Jewett's Maine coast. If she were less the artist, her almost too careful realism would flatten into drab reporting, but it never quite does so. Every detail seems right and worth recording, although often actually without significance. She somehow makes dull and hackneyed people worth knowing and listening to, monotonous cornland worth looking at, stuffy church "entertainments" worth attending, the gimcrack sitting rooms of fifty years ago comfortable and cozy—all this without prettifying and romanticizing. The texture of her prose is firm and rich, and the unvaryingly correct descriptive word or phrase must be the envy of many writers.

"New Hope," however, does not silence old complaints. There is need for more resolute narrative. One half-way sympathizes with a British reader who wished that her stories were a bit more meretricious. Her world is perfectly done, but we yearn for more things to happen in it. In "New Hope" the villagers welcome a new minister and his family, visit one another, feast constantly on fried chicken and cake; the rhythm of their year finds its accents in the seasonal church festivals; a child is born, two minor characters die, an engagement is announced; the minister answers a call in Oregon and leaves New Hope with regret. This is all good in itself, but tantalizingly insufficient.

A good word should be said for the two children, as real and living as any pre-adolescents who ever played, dreamed, quarreled, wheedled, and strutted between the covers of a book. We see the world through their eyes, and it is a tribute to the author's talent that this world is new and brave, and that the children do not become tiresome or obnoxious. "New Hope" lives up to the cheerful promise of its title, and its cheerfulness and warmth are achieved inoffensively and honestly.

Foster . . .

IN THE NIGHT DID I SING. By O'Kane Foster. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1942. 324 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by SARAH CHOKLA GROSS

CUT loose for generations from their original Spain but yearning backward to the old ways, unassimilated, sad and alien in religion and speech are the people whose life in Taos Valley Mr. Foster pictures. Against a background of purple mountains and grand scenery, he portrays their lives and epitomizes the mingled hopelessness and good-humor of the community. To give the skeleton of his plot or to name the characters of his tale is almost to mislead because what really is important is the author's view of the Mexicans of Sangre de Cristo.

A Mexican of the Valley would hardly have written "In the Night I Sing." He would not know how to look into himself and analyze his religious ecstasy if he were one of the secret flagellants, nor would he be willing to do it; were he willing, he would lack the education and the English to put his thoughts into words. The scorn he felt for an American like the Mr. Brown of the story who lived in the Valley seasonally and painted such picturesque canvases as the portrait of "My Friend Jesus" (Jesus, father of Rudolfo), a New Mexican might be too courteous to set down. So it required an America to be articulate for these Americans who seem hardly to share our common nationality.

Mr. Foster is no Willa Cather, though he writes of New Mexico and there is a priest and a church in his novel. Nor is he an Erskine Caldwell or a John Steinbeck pointing to a need for reform in the economic lot of a regional minority. He is nevertheless sensitive, honest, and able to stir both curiosity and pity. "In the Night I Sing" promises well for the series of which it is the first.

Brockway . . .

RESPECTFULLY YOURS, ANNIE. Introduction by Sylvia Brockway. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co. 1942. 230 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by FRANCES SMYTH

IN July, 1939, Sylvia Brockway brought her two children to America for a visit. War was declared a week before their projected return to England. On that same day, Annie, their London cook, sat down to write "Dear Madam" the news of home. Each week since then Annie has sent off a report to the exiles and, according to Miss Brockway, Annie's letters have never failed to arrive. "It's just as if Churchill had sent over special boats for Annie," the children said.

Annie's reactions during the first months of the "phony war" must have been those of many people, not all of them in Annie's social class. Her resentment chiefly centered on the disruption of normal life: her master's erratic hours as an air-raid warden; the children's absence; the lack of parties and excitement; the threatened rationing of food.

When the Blitz started Annie didn't like it. Nor did she like rationing. But she managed to handle both. For weeks during the raids she never took her corsets off but "dossed" on the kitchen floor, and during the days she spent hours up and down "the street" searching for prizes in food which she supplemented with items scrounged from neighboring gardens. Actually, as the war intensified, Annie found herself with as much to do and as much to worry about as she had in happier years. Visitors took to dropping in for meals and staying for days, some of them lingering as long as they could simply in order to enjoy a hot bath. And in place of "the Babies" who had been her chief concern, Annie found more and more of her attention required by the animals—Toddy, the Sealyham, and Nigger, the kitten. Toddy was afraid of air-raids and required considerable comforting while they were going on.

Annie's language is vivid and accurate. Her letters are racy and communicate even to strange readers the living detail of Annie's days. Annie herself is, I suppose, typically British. And yet, except for her attitude toward the Royal Family and the upper-classes in general, she is as familiar a type in the United States as in any other country. British pluck, grit, and stamina characterize Annie, but any American will recognize her as someone who just doesn't like to be pushed around.

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Preview of A Better World

THE MEN WHO MAKE THE FUTURE. By Bruce Bliven. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1942. 316 *pp., and index.* $3.

Reviewed by JOHN E. PFEIFFER

ALTHOUGH science is an exciting subject, most scientists are notoriously unsuccessful in making their fields exciting to the layman. As a result of this unfortunate situation it is usually the layman who brings the thrilling aspects of research before the public. So Bruce Bliven—who edits the *New Republic* and contributes considerable writing on politics and economics to its columns—need make no apologies for offering a book on science.

Mr. Bliven's enthusiasm will carry over to the reader and for the most part he has attached his enthusiasm to accounts of important research. There is a fascinating chapter on a large and important family of related chemicals called the sterols. Natural bile acids belong to this group, so does bone-building vitamin D. Relatively small changes in molecular structure produce the sex hormones which are also sterols. Other members of the family include the so-called organizer tissue which shapes the growth patterns of animal embryos and methylcholanthrene, perhaps the most powerful cancer-producing substance known to science.

This chapter and sections on viruses, genes, and recent plant research represent Mr. Bliven at his best. Another section, The Unsolved Mysteries, describes some of science's biggest mysteries from the nature of cosmic rays to the cause of arthritis. Far below par, however, is a chapter called "Exit, the Common Cold," which devotes itself largely to the well-worn tale of germ-killing ultraviolet lamps and fails to consider several newer and at least equally important studies on the problem of controlling air-borne infections.

"Bruce Bliven's enthusiasm carries over to the reader."

Mr. Bliven is interested in the men as well as their works. He shows that scientists as a whole do not consider war a rational way of settling international disputes, but we believe that progress cannot continue under totalitarian governments—whether Nazi, Fascist, or Communist. They "believe firmly in democracy," affirm that "opportunity should be based on ability," and are convinced that poverty and depressions can be abolished.

But scientists too frequently isolate themselves from social issues around them, even to the extent of rarely attacking quacks who hoodwink the public in the name of research. Mr. Bliven and a great number of other persons believe that laboratory men should go out into the wide world of affairs and take a more active part in shaping things to come. The author would have contributed even more to the rapidly increasing literature on science and society if he had suggested how this might be accomplished. He may have unexpressed thoughts along such lines, for he points out that "my criticism is directed far less at the scientists than at society as a whole."

In general, the reader will learn much about research from the book, but very little about the relationship between science and society.

Empress of the French

EUGENIE: STAR-CROSSED EMPRESS OF THE FRENCH. By Rita Wellman. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1941. 326 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

THE heavy, scholarly biography is rarely a complete failure; even at its worst, and dullest, in the two-volumed Victorian life Lytton Strachey held up to ridicule, it has an honest stodginess and solid fund of facts. The wittily superior biography, even when its wit fails to come off, the psychiatrizing biography, even when its psychiatry is bungled and amateurish, are rarely quite as bad as the vivid tale of a vivid life the least bit overdone. Luscious and starry adjectives, palpitating adverbs, glitter, rush, soul-searching, purple passages, warm passages, asterisks—the shop-girl's dream.

Miss Wellman chose her sub-title most unwisely. That "star-crossed Empress" looks like a warning of worse to come. But the reader who goes ahead will be pleasantly surprised. This is really an excellent narrative of an amazing life. "Sound," "scholarly," "profound" are not words that come naturally to the reviewer trying to describe it: and the congenital grader of themes in English Composition 54 will sometimes want to bring out the blue pencil and mark an F. W. for "Fine Writing" in the margin. But on the whole Miss Wellman avoids the panting immediacy, the romantic maunderings, the lovely writing into which this kind of biography so easily falls. A taste so sober, classic and chaste as to be offended by this book would be offended by anything that could be written about Eugénie. For that lady's life, like her times, was as romantic as possible.

Unlike her royal friend Victoria, on whose life Miss Wellman first tried her hand, the Empress Eugénie left extraordinarily little of her own for a biographer to work on. Victoria's diaries and letters fill volumes of print. Eugénie left no diary, and, though she survived the first débacle of Sedan by fifty years, and saw the Prussians soundly beaten, she steadily refused to write her memoirs. There is, of course, an immense amount of material about a person who so held the attention of the world and moved in its center. This material Miss Wellman has mastered for her purposes, which are not those of a historian, certainly not of a research historian, but those of a dramatist. With a dramatist's skill she brings in her facts when they will do her most good—but they are facts, and she brings them in finally. This is not set and formal biography, with an introductory account of ancestry, a chapter on infancy and childhood, and neat chronological sequences throughout. Eugénie's American grandfather, William Kirkpatrick, appears, and only as a vague figure, long after the book has started. Morny's name keeps cropping up, but Miss Wellman bides her time before his portrait appears. There is, then, a trace of that allusiveness so tempting to writers steeped in the details of the life of a past age, and which sometimes annoys a reader unfamiliar with the age. Otherwise, the book is an admirable, steadily interesting account of the Empress and those whose lives hers touched, from Washington Irving to Jean Cocteau.

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of Literature

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THE KINSHIP OF WAR

AMERICANS have always been a migrant people and even now, with restrictions on rubber and gas threatening to eliminate, for the time being at least, the constant auto journeyings of recent years, there seems but small likelihood that they will cease their wanderings. One has only to take a long railroad trip today to discover how much of America is still in flux. The camps alone have set up a new flow of travel with the constant going back and forth of soldiers on furlough and the frequent visits of their relatives and friends, and with it have begun a reinvigoration of the camaraderie that was so marked a feature of the earlier democracy of the United States. Watch the passengers on any long distance train today and you will see that everywhere strangers are in conversation—the uniform is open sesame to acquaintanceship—and men and women, who in peace time would have sat if not in unfriendly at least in untalkative solitude, are in discussion together. And since they come from all corners of the country, they are exchanging variant views, rubbing minds over divergent beliefs. There is a vast, vitalizing democratic influence at work among the people which, if it continues at the pace it has begun, may be accounted an alleviating circumstance in the catastrophe of war.

There was perhaps nothing in the early American republic that more certainly worked for the amalgamation of its different peoples than the peripatetic nature of its civilization. Racial prejudices, inherited from a European past, broke down in the intercourse of a pioneer country where the qualities which counted for success were patent to all men and the property of no one group, and where the groups were constantly dissolving and melting into new combinations as the frontier drew the adventuresome and the resourceful on. With the shifting about of people went a continual interchange of points of view and experience, an eager interest in the opinions of others, a respect for the knowledge of the man who had had opportunity for investigation and reflection. The interest may have been callow, the opinions crude, but the zest for discussion, the hearty friendliness to strangers were real, and made not only for a well-knit but for a democratic society.

Inevitably, of course, the vast growth in population and the uneven alignment of wealth in the United States of the last century operated to establish social distinctions and to obliterate the prevalent good fellowship of strangers so marked in the early republic. New agencies, to be sure, came into being which worked to consolidate the American mind and temper—the press, which enlightened opinion even while often splitting it, the radio which made possible its informing simultaneously in all portions of the country, and the movies which tended to standardize it. But a stratification of American society had superseded its youthful homogeneity and the old democracy had gone. Now there are eloquent signs that it is being reborn in a new companionship between persons of all kinds.

If there is any comfort that can be drawn from war, there is perhaps solace in this knowledge that no matter how inevitably government must be authoritarian while the struggle is on, the great draft army must be intrinsically democratic in its effect. What regional and other literature has been attempting in recent years to do in making each section of the country known to the others seems now in the way of being brought to pass by the actual contacts of persons from all parts of the land. In the turmoil of war a new fellowship is being born.

A. L.

To Ideologists

By William Rose Benét

YOU can tell by words. I knew the word was wrong,
though the second definition is "a dreamer."
Ideas are not a science, neither can they
be warmth to the heart or beauty to the brain.
We know now what they do, though it is not
that we should cease to think! It is the calling
these cold Procrustean systems after thought,
making the actions of the brain excuse
ape cruelty and murder. Now observe
the rapine loosed, the bewilderment of lies!

Bury that word! Let us have names for things
that mean the thing, and have no more evasions
and no more highfalutin' pseudo-language!
Mint words like *honor* again, and *love,* and *hate!*
(They say a semanteme "is a word, as *tree*"—
I'll take a hickory, you can have *semantemes!*)
And get this straight! When guys go out to die
they do it with the curt four-letter words,
they do it because you bound down Gulliver
with the hairs you split, with the lying things you called
the evil things, with super-definitions
and straws in the hair of theorists. They go
because they are not statesmen who palavered
or editors who jittered, but because
the world got all wrapped up in such a mess
of obfuscating words that now at last
we have to shoot it out.

I knew a word
like "ideology" could do no good,
I knew it was what Shakespeare called a "bug word,"
I saw it flattening the brainy boys,
stuffing brief-cases with a mess of myth,
while the convinced barbarians toiled ahead
to take the whole word over . . .

There are words
like *blood* and *sweat* and *tears,* as now we know—
simple old words like *bravery, faith,* and *death,*
plain words like *horror* and *pain* and *loss* and *grief,*
and a word we somewhere heard but long forgot
or just mislaid—the Word they said was God . . .

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letter from Grant Wood

SIR:—Grant Wood's early death—he died on February 12th, just one day before his fiftieth birthday—was a great loss to American art. Your readers may be interested in what he wrote me on the two books that influenced him most, "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn":

> Much of the humor of the books escaped me when I read them as a boy. Yet, this was not always the case and I recall distinctly that one of my earliest realizations of the humorous grew out of reading "Huckleberry Finn." It was the part wherein Huck, staying with the Grangerfords, describes the sentimental pictures a daughter in the family had painted before her premature death. "They was different from any pictures I ever see before" Huck said, "Blacker, mostly than is common." And of all the pictures, you will remember, the masterpiece was the unfinished study of a grief-strick young woman ready to leap off a bridge, tears, gown and hair flowing and with three pairs of arms —all in different positions. The idea had been to see which pair of arms would look the best and then to scratch out the other two, but the young artist had died before she made up her mind. "The young woman in the picture," Huck remarked, "had a kind of nice, sweet face but there was so many arms it made her look too spidery, seemed to me."
>
> As I look back on it now, I realize that my response to this passage was a revelation. Having been born into a world of Victorian standards, I had accepted and admired the ornate, the lugubrious and the excessively sentimental naturally and without question. And *this was my first intimation that there was something ridiculous about sentimentality.*

CYRIL CLEMENS.

Mark Twain Society,
Webster Groves, Missouri.

Non Omnis Moriar

SIR:—"I shall not altogether die. The greater part of me shall escape the Death Goddess."

Does anyone know if the composer of the tune for "John Brown's Body" received as much as five dollars for his contribution to Horace's brand of immortality? Because that is what Julia Ward Howe received from *The Atlantic Monthly* for "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Lilian Whiting, who came to Boston during the last years of that city's golden age of authors, vouches for this fact, and that Mrs. Howe herself told her how the poem came to be written. Dr. and Mrs. Howe were visiting in Washington in war time and one day made a tour of the battle camps. Everywhere the soldiers were singing "John Brown's Body." The tune rang in her head till she fell asleep—and afterwards! She woke suddenly in the frenzy of creation. What she was saying to herself must be captured then or be lost forever. A lead pencil, a dim light, any scrap of paper to get the thing down. Glorious words wrote themselves into the immortality of that tune and the immortality of the great Lincoln sleeping not far away in the White House. "Up to God, all three!"

HARRIET GAYLORD.

Bronxville, New York.

"The Thomasville Ladies Literary Society met yesterday at the Rotary Club Building to hear an interesting talk by Mona Garth, the famous writer. Miss Garth wore an aqua wool dress, fashioned in the glamor drape of a long torso blouse with fullish slim-hipped skirt. Her hair, arranged in the feather cut curl, was adorned by a sheared Beaver toque that matched her fur jacket. Her bag, gloves, and shoes of dark brown suede completed her stunning outfit. The subject of her talk was her latest best-selling novel."

SRL Family

SIR:—Your splended reminder and service to our soldiers and sailors by giving a "good book" is deserving of full coöperation.

Why not inscribe our names and addresses in the good books that we are proud to pass on to our soldiers? This will overcome the temptation to get rid of the trash, and increase the interest in our gifts tenfold. Never doubt that they need your words and your friendship. And most of all, this little gesture will be good training for the immediate future, when the good neighbor policy will come to mean, the man next door, and the man on the street, and the man without an automobile. Most of us still do not realize that we have our feet in the mud together and will have to join hands to get out.

So many of us of World War No. 1 recall with what eager delight we came across the name and address of the giver written in some fine old classic, or a crisp new one, contributed to the War Service Library of those days. It immediately transformed, what would have been an impersonal volume among many, to a personally appreciated gift. The temptation to write to that person was very great, and was yielded to in so many instances. Our letters always brought prompt and wholehearted replies. There was no better food for morale. And I would say now:

Inscribe your books with your message. Don't hesitate. Our soldiers and sailors are our life-line. Each and every one is important. We want them to know that we know the importance of their job. Let them know that you are at their service, and would count it a privilege to hear from them.

JOSEPH C. LYONS.

St. Louis, Missouri.

Information, Please

SIR:—Can anyone help us solve the mystery of the emerald bracelet? The bracelet belongs to Lin Yutang's "Tanni" in "A Leaf in the Storm." Tanni wore it assiduously from childhood because she could not get it to come off. Finally when it is knocked off at the time of Poya's death, the bracelet becomes a jade one, and is buried with Poya. What does the bracelet symbolize? Why does it turn into jade? In fact, why is the bracelet mentioned at all?

META AND JOHN.

Highland Park, Illinois.

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Dissenting Opinions

MUSIC critics, writes Arthur Schnabel, are an unnecessary evil. They are bored, depressed, mind-and ear-weary, confused, and degraded by the sordid influence of the American press. They contribute nothing, harm nothing. They simply fill space in a medium in which "good, mediocre and bad are quite mechanically juxtaposed in each edition."

Arthur Schnabel, you see, is a genius at the keyboard of a concert grand. But he hardly qualifies as a student of the American newspaper and if sometimes he essays to study the subject he might make up his mind as to whether music critics are: (1) "professional musicians (preponderantly teachers) and therefore connected with music in a most legitimate manner"; or (2) "some very young man or girl" who writes "twenty or more crushing lines."

If there is anything wrong with music in America, it is hardly with the American newspaper or the music critic. It is rather with the virtuosos, with the conductors, with the professional music-followers—with the stuffed-shirt brigade trying so desperately to hold on to their artistic fort and to keep out the rabble.

There are few great musical organizations in the United States which are not in financial difficulty. Why? Simply because the so-called society set, with the connivance of the professional musician, is determined to hold on to its last great artistic stranglehold, whether they understand the sounds coming from the stage, or not.

Dr. Schnabel has fallen into an error which so many professional musicians make. He has forgotten there is such a thing as the great American public.

Yes, the despised American minority which keeps re-electing Franklin Roosevelt by such thundering majorities. The same minority which will produce the tools of war and which will make up the armies of war.

Yes, there is an American public. And the medium of that public is the American newspaper. The medium which speaks to them not in "intellectually exacting" language, but rather in "language not too austere"—which is something they understand.

What musicians have so long scorned to admit to themselves is the fact that the American newspaper has helped make the public conscious of music, and has, by its "rather extravagant" allotment of space, made the public realize that the communal musical organizations are a civic asset and not the luxurious pampered baby of the "gold coast."

Bing Crosby has done more for the cause of serious music in America than Dr. Schnabel. The fast-pattering gentleman with the strange throat has taken the fancy film from the big names of the concert hall and disclosed them to millions of radio listeners as good-natured, good-humored folk with an amazing grasp of American slang.

Jose Iturbi ceased being some strange-sounding "furriner." The great Iturbi became another American who could laugh and make music. And in making music, endeared it to the people who listened.

So with the impertinent Oscar Levant. His descriptions of musical passages may have brought shudders to the professional musicians, but they have brought laughter from millions of throats and a realization that music was not a chore, but fun!

So with Deems Taylor, who can be classified as a music critic and therefore out of bounds in such a dissertation as this.

What Dr. Schnabel and so many other musicians have overlooked is the fact that there is a great American public hungering for music and being driven from it by the frigid and intellectual approach of its interpreters and being drawn back by the human touch. The human touch of laughter and understanding—both on the part of entertainers and the American press with its "language not too austere."

It is the current practice of musicians, artists, scientists, and other superior intellectual classes to look with disfavor upon the American press. They regard it as a disjointed and uncohesive mechanical product issued with scant regard for ideals or accuracy, with one eye upon the counting room and the other looking only for the story that will bring the largest circulation.

Heaven knows, the American newspaper has its sins. But it has grown more in the last decade than American musicians have in the last three. There has come a departmentalization which Dr. Schnabel has somehow missed; a grouping of related subjects rather than of a pertinent subject being "surrounded by columns of disinterested chatter," as the gifted pianist would have his readers believe. There is no record in my knowledge of a music review appearing on the sports pages, or the women's pages, or the financial pages, or even next to a Roosevelt speech.

"For one who pursues musical—artistic—ideals," writes the good doctor, "to be placed in journalism must cause him some uneasiness."

There is a perfectly good American word which can sum this up in short order: "Nuts!"

There has been room—there is—and there is going to be more room in journalism for ideals. More ideals than are revealed by the orchestra conductor who insists upon his wealthy patrons coming in full dress.

I once protested this to a maestro, arguing to him that he was keeping away hundred upon hundreds of men and women who loved music, but who scorned artificiality.

"Oh, no you don't," he chuckled. "They're going to keep coming dressed to my concerts. One picture on the society page in full dress and silk hat is worth $5,000!"

I can get him $50,000.

From people who like to hear music.

But they come from the wrong side of the tracks, Dr. Schnabel.

The people who understand the "not too austere language" of the American press.

NORMAN L. ISAACS.

Oscar Levant "brought laughter from millions."

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 413)

WALTER S. LANDOR:

HYMN TO AMERICA

(Nov. 15, 1851)

Daughter of Albion!
The dawn is reddening of the day
When slender and soft-voiced Malay
  Shall learn from thee to love the Laws.
Europe in blood may riot still;
Only do thou pronounce thy will,
  And war, outside her gates, shall pause.

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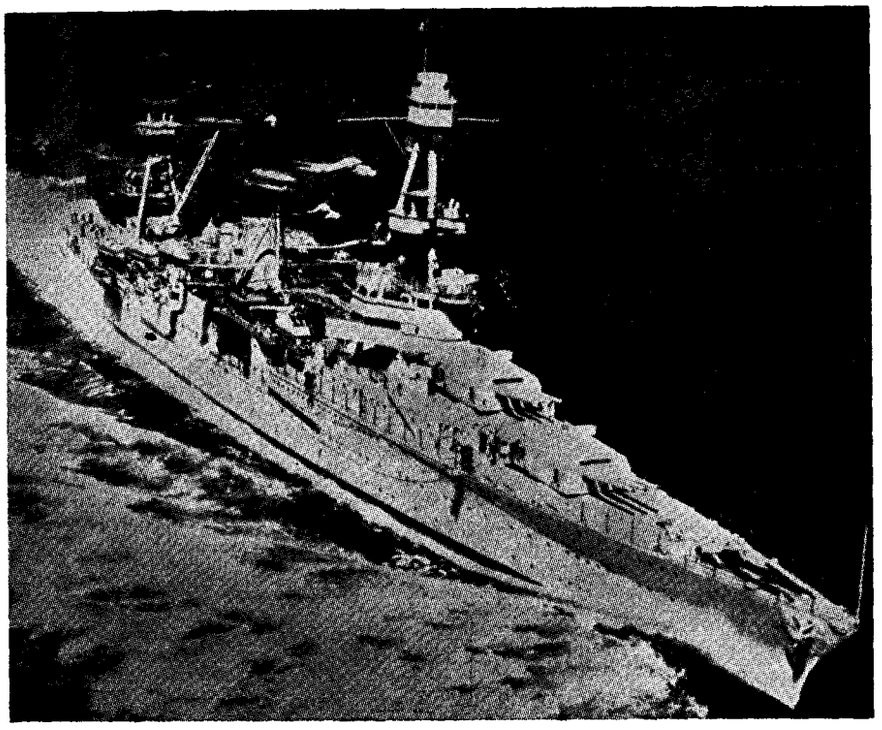

—*From "Sea Power and Today's War."*

War on the Water

ACTION AT SEA. By George H. Johnston. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1942. 185 *pp.* $2.75.

THE WAR AT SEA. By Gilbert Cant. New York: John Day Co. 1942. 340 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

IN World War I, with the Germans plunging down into France and Allied depression at the lowest point, His Majesty's Australian cruiser *Sydney* furnished the first flash of light by bringing to book the famous raider *Emden*. In World War II, at the dark hour of France's surrender, another His Majesty's Australian cruiser *Sydney* again lifted hearts by bringing to action the Italian cruiser *Bartolomeo Colleone* and sending her to the bottom of the Mediterranean. Later *Sydney II* went on to take part in practically every British victory in what came to be known as "Cunningham's Pond," to shoot up Italian destroyers off the coasts of Eritrea, and to come to a strange and unexpected end in a duel of mutual destruction against a German raider in a remote corner of the Pacific.

"Action at Sea" is the story of that new *Sydney* and it is about as good a war book as a book written during the war can be. It sticks well to the point, does not indulge in too much fulmination about the unpleasant characteristics and action of the enemy, contains practically no fine writing and wide sweeping general statements, but has a great deal of new information.

"The War at Sea" tells the story, not of a single ship but of all the fighting navies down to the arbitrarily chosen date, December 31, 1941; it narrates the events, gives some examination to the strategic ideas underlying the events, and fits naval actions, which always seem to be isolated from any connection with each other, into the general picture of the conflict.

It is a better book about the war than anyone has any right to expect during a war. The author has evidently had access to records and sources denied to the newspapers at the time of the events described, and he has made the fullest use not only of these sources but also of the vivid personal narratives of action which are, journalistically, one of the best performances of the war.

If it is not the complete, definitive history of the war at sea, this is only because the author has lacked access to the minds and records of the men who made the strategy on the other side of the fence. At least it is infinitely more readable than any of the official histories that will subsequently appear. At best it is one of those works which will be recognized by future historians as "original sources," and which may be read by contemporaries uninterested in the verdict of history for a fine narrative style, set with little gems of irony. A useful appendix gives naval losses to date, and another the disposition of the French fleet.

Irish Pageant

IRELAND—PAST AND PRESENT. By Tom Ireland. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1942. 1010 *pp., and index.* $5.

IRELAND—IN THE AGE OF REFORM AND REVOLUTION. By Nicholas Mansergh. London: George Allen & Unwin. 1942. 272 *pp. and index.* $3.

Reviewed by ALBERT SHAW

ALMOST a year ago Major-General John F. O'Ryan and a hundred and twenty-eight other Americans of Irish descent made an appeal to the Prime Minister at Dublin, Mr. De Valera, to give Great Britain access to the Western ports of Ireland. It took the form of an extended and impressive cablegram, sent on March 9, 1941. In prefatory pages, Mr. Tom Ireland prints this dispatch, and follows it with a compendium of Anglo-Irish history that fills almost a thousand pages.

The critical reader will at once discover that Mr. Ireland's ponderous volume is made up of unrelated parts. Its opening chapters are separate and independent monographs. The first, for example, relates to the strategic importance of Ireland, and the necessity in a European war for military coöperation between England and Ireland. The motive of the volume seems to be frankly expressed in the title of the second chapter: "Ireland will not fight for England unless Partition is abolished."

We may pass over the third chapter with the single remark that it summarizes historic claims to the effect that "America owes its very existence and preservation to the Irish." The fourth chapter is well enough explained by its title, "How America's helping England depends upon England's treatment of Ireland."

With an abrupt change of perspective, Mr. Ireland devotes several hundred pages to a resumé of Irish history, with especial reference to English invasions and inter-island relationships, through seven centuries. It suffices perhaps to say that the author made diligent use of much well-known historical material. His attitude is frankly pro-Irish; but his successive chapters are well-defined by periods, and show political intelligence as the reader is carried through many dramatic and tragic phases of Irish history, especially those of the last century-and-a-half.

Coming to more recent situations, this author idealizes young Michael Collins, hero of the Black and Tan War, accords high praise to Mr. Cos-

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grave's administration of the Irish Free State, while also giving credit to Mr. De Valera for sincere and patriotic leadership.

In his concluding chapters Mr. Ireland abandons, again, the role of historical authorship and offers a day-by-day compilation (from current newspapers and periodicals) of political occurrences in Ireland during the years 1939 and 1940. The final chapter bears the title "Ireland will be united, prosperous and free." The recent landing of American troops in Northern Ireland is an event that has, at least on its face, rather violently upset this author's thesis. Regardless of the future unity of Ireland, Washington is now more completely pro-British than London itself, if that were possible. Nevertheless, Mr. Ireland has stated the facts regarding partition and the Ulster controversy in a manner that must impress his readers of Catholic faith and Celtic origin.

Americans of Irish descent in the third generation are no longer "Irish-Americans." They lack the deadly zeal of their forebears in the Parnell period; and for the most part they are unaware that Winston Churchill was War Minister during the Black-and-Tan struggle which has already made Micky Collins a legendary figure in Irish annals.

Mr. Tom Ireland has gathered his materials with the assistance of library experts in Dublin, and his encyclopedic survey of Irish problems and politics, past and present, may help to rekindle pro-Irish sentiment at Washington. This in turn might influence a fortunate post-war adjustment of the one serious difference that until now has stood in the way of Anglo-Irish harmony. Those who might otherwise be baffled by Mr. Ireland's seeming lack of orderly method will discover that his chapters may be read separately, without regard to sequence. For purposes of reference, also, the volume is supplied with an excellent analytical index.

Mr. Nicholas Mansergh of Pembroke College, Oxford, is a distinguished scholar and political philosopher who writes neither as historian nor as controversialist. He deals rather with fundamental concepts, and discusses the problems of states and nations as, in medicine, a skillful diagnostician might comment objectively upon a particular malady or a given case. His newest book is entitled "Ireland in the Age of Reform and Revolution." It concerns itself with Anglo-Irish relations, and political forces operating in Ireland, during the period from 1840 to 1921.

In two previous volumes Mr. Mansergh has written upon (first) the Irish Free State, and (second) the Government of Northern Ireland. In manner of treatment his objective method reminds one of such writers as Walter Bagehot and John Morley. In the present volume he discovers for us the opinions upon the Irish question that were entertained by such continental nationalists as Count Cavour and Mazzini. Also, he has found it an interesting task to unearth the expressed views on Ireland of the Communist leaders from Marx to Lenin.

The second part of the book comments upon the Home Rule movement under Gladstone's leadership, and the Ulster question as it has evolved during the last half-century. Concluding chapters are penetrating studies of influence affecting recent Irish opinions and movements, with an attempt to evaluate American and European "reactions to the Irish question" following the World War.

This well-balanced volume—which is essentially a group of related essays upon Ireland as a subject of political analysis—concludes the final chapter with three sentences well worthy of quotation in times as strenuous as those of the present year?

> The solution of the outstanding political problem which confronts the Ireland of today appears dependent upon the acceptance of cultural tolerance, a virtue whose adoption it is easy to recommend but difficult to effect. For there is at the least a superficial conflict between cultural tolerance and a strong, self-conscious national sentiment determined to inspire coming generations by a revival of the glories of an historic past. But Irish nationalism has shown so much good sense, has displayed so constructive a spirit in the hour of its triumph, that even here a final victory may yet be won.

Tom Ireland

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

TWENTY FAMOUS QUESTIONS

Here are twenty more famous questions asked by famous poets. (Others in March 1, 1941, and May 31, 1941.) Again, you don't have to answer the questions—just name the poets. Allowing 5 points for each correct answer, a score of 60 is par, 70 is good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 23.

1. Why don't you speak for yourself, John?
2. Who is Silvia? what is she that all our swains commend her?
3. Where are the snows of yesteryear?
4. Ah, did you once see Shelley plain, and did he stop and speak to you, and did you speak to him again?
5. How does the water come down at Lodore?
6. Oh what can ail thee, knight-at-arms, alone and palely loitering?
7. Where is the man who can live without dining?
8. What was he doing, the great god Pan, down in the reeds by the river?
9. Rose kissed me today. Will she kiss me tomorrow?
10. Who ran to help me when I fell, and would some pretty story tell, or kiss the place to make it well?
11. What passion cannot Music raise and quell?
12. When true hearts lie withered and fond ones are flown, O who would inhabit this bleak world alone?
13. Who, or which, or why, or what is the Akond of Swat?
14. What has posterity done for us?
15. And where is that band who so vauntingly swore that the havoc of war and the battle's confusion a home and a country should leave us no more?
16. What shall I do to be forever known, and make the age to come my own?
17. Christ! What are patterns for?
18. How is it that you live, and what is it you do?
19. Breathes there a man with soul so dead, who never to himself hath said, This is my own, my native land?
20. "Is it weakness of intellect, birdie?" I cried. "Or a rather tough worm in your little inside?"

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Southern Caste and Class

DEEP SOUTH. By Allison Davis, Burleigh and Mary Gardner. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1941. 558 pp. $4.50.

Reviewed by HOWARD W. ODUM

ONE of the most distinctive contributions to the literature of realistic social study in America has been the attempt to describe contemporary societies from the viewpoint of what may be called the anthropological approach. In substance, this means that the attempt is made to give adequate portraiture of the people and their behavior in terms of a cross-section of the society at a given time irrespective of historical and cultural backgrounds. All societies are to be studied alike. One studies Middletowns, Southtowns, Westtowns, Tropictowns of contemporary modern civilization exactly as he would study and report on a primitive tribe in Africa or a remote village in Samoa.

In this literature, there was first "Middletown" and "Middletown in Transition," by the Lynds; then later John Dollard's "Caste and Class in a Southerntown," Hortense Powdermaker's "After Freedom," and now "Deep South," by Allison Davis, Burleigh and Mary Gardner. Earlier volumes which serve as preview and background for these studies were Ruth Benedict's "Patterns of Culture," Margaret Meade's "Growing Up in New Guinea" and "Coming of Age in Samoa," Bronislaw Malinowski's "Crime and Custom in Savage Society," together with Robert Redfield's "Tepotzland" and "Folk Cultures of Yukatan." Other recent books on the borderline between the sociological-educational survey and the anthropological approach are Charles Johnson's "Growing up in the Black Belt"; Warner, Junker, and Adams's "Color and Human Nature," and Allison Davis and John Dollard's "Children of Bondage," both sponsored by the American Council on Education.

The theme of "Deep South" is that the ordered pattern is one in which the social world is clearly divided between the white caste and Negro caste, the two sharing disproportionately in the privileges and obligations of all social participation. Only in the economic sphere is there partial relaxation of the caste sanction. This caste system is not based upon economic factors, but is organized around the control of sex, in which there is an unbridgeable chasm for all time, past, present, and future, between the white woman and the Negro man. The application of the caste is, of course, varied with indifferent systems of color caste—class and caste system, upper class, middle class, and lower caste variation, with certain studies of mobility and cliques, both within the white caste and colored class. The colored caste is studied for observation on class variation. The authors conclude that both the caste system and class system are changing through time, but both are persistent and observable as the Deep South's mold of existence.

This volume, with its substantially more than 500 pages of presentation, is a distinctive contribution. It has some beautiful writing in it in many places and many accurate portraitures, alongside much that is not well integrated and that seems often naive.

As realistic literature, the volume has many implications. One in particular should make it a very important contribution in the development of American cultural evolution and in the adjustment of racial and regional problems. This implication is, however, probably the opposite of what is commonly expected. That is, the volume shows conclusively that racial divisions in the southern regions of the United States are culturally organic and are products of long, evolutionary development. This is the sociological and anthropological view of cultural evolution. It is unreasonable, therefore, to expect that through mere process of legislation or coercion or propaganda a situation so organically and culturally conditioned over so long a period of time can be changed overnight. The book should be a powerful and eloquent appeal to the American people to understand the drama, and often tragic drama in the grand manner, of their problem of the white and Negro, and a challenge to work it out on an enduring basis of readjustment, on the regional-national approach rather than on a sectional-local basis.

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"Madame Chairman . . ."

ACCUSTOMED AS I AM. By John Mason Brown. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1942. 201 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by MARIE AHNIGHITO PEARY

THIS is the book which every professional lecturer has longed to write, but hasn't quite dared, for fear of biting the hand that feeds him. The effect on Mr. Brown's future audience, to say nothing of welcoming committees is still necessarily a matter of conjecture but not so the effect upon his readers.

"Accustomed As I Am" is a book for everyone. It will be a revelation to those who think that "lecturing is easy" and a solace to those who know it is not. Unlike Mr. Brown, I have not yet been accused by my offspring of "goin' off lecherin'," but they have been known to remark in my presence that they wonder how a person has the nerve to take money for talking when she talks all the time anyhow. After reading "Accustomed As I Am," even the layman will realize that the lecturing is the least part of the ordeal, at least for the lecturer.

This hilarious report," says the book jacket, "will delight everyone who ever made a speech, introduced a speaker, or has simply been part of the great listening public" and strangely enough, this is true, but only because of Mr. Brown's great tact and sense of humor. He is never caustic or disagreeable and it does seem as if he had had provocation. The appeal of the book lies in the fact that it is comforting.

The author's descriptions of awkward introductions which have been given him would make even the most hardened program chairman squirm were they not told in such a kindly way that the thought comes immediately:—"Goodness, I was never as bad as that." Other lecturers will read with delight because until they opened the book they had undoubtedly been suffering from either a persecution or an inferiority complex. Surely no one had ever been so badly treated, so neglected, or so misunderstood as they had been. Yet for every experience of theirs which rankles, Mr. Brown has one to match or better it. Best of all, here is a book which presents no problem and arouses no forebodings. It is one continuous chuckle from beginning to end.

It is impossible to quote one story from a book in which all the anecdotes are outstanding. Suffice it to say that every phase of lecturing is covered, the continuous travel, life in hotels, being over entertained and being neglected, being met and not being met, sitting through long, rambling introductions and being forced to start speaking with no introduction at all, right down to the homecoming, when no one outside of your family even knows that you have been away, and no one, least of all your family, wants to hear about your experiences.

Possible critics of "Accustomed As I Am" may fall into two classes—those who think Mr. Brown has glossed things over, and those who feel that the book must be fiction because such things couldn't possibly happen. To both these schools of thought, the pessimists and the optimists, Louisa M. Alcott gave the perfect answer years ago. When asked why she never described a love scene in any of her books, she replied:—"To those who have never been in such a situation, any account would sound exaggerated, while to those who have experienced, it, anything I might say would seem like an under statement."

—*From the book.*

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Diplomat in Two Wars

ALL MY BORN DAYS: Experiences of a Naval Intelligence Officer in Europe. By John A. Gade. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1942. 408 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by HENRY C. WOLFE

TEACHERS who believe that history is best learned through biography will put Captain Gade's memoirs on their modern history lists. His "part of which I was" helps illuminate the background of two world wars. In the spring of 1916 he went to Brussels as a member of Mr. Hoover's Commission for Relief in Belgium. In the spring of 1940 he was stationed as our Naval Attaché in the Belgian capital when Hitler's hordes blitzed the low countries. Between wars he was on the scene of events in Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, and the Baltic nations.

The historic scenes that Captain Gade relives are varied, dramatic, sometimes humorous, often significant. There is Clemenceau at the Paris conference saying impatiently: "Then let's meet at five; Mr. Wilson will have rested, Signor Tittoni can look forward to his sleep, and Mr. Balfour can sleep during the discussion." There is blustering Goering, refusing to take a lower place than Marshal Petain at the King of Jugoslavia's funeral.

The author witnessed the fighting between soldiers and communists in the streets of Berlin. He helped eject General von der Goltz from Latvia. He did what he could to alleviate suffering and establish order in postwar Finland, Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania. From Portugal he visited the front during the Spanish war.

Through the pages of this autobiography moves a fascinating galaxy of saints and sinners, queens and peasants, noble men and knaves. We see King Oscar of Norway, Stanford White, Cardinal Mercier, General Mannerheim, Paderewski, the Empress Dowager of Russia, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Salazar of Portugal.

The chapters on Belgium's enslavement at the hands of the Nazis are an important contribution to the understanding of World War II. Captain Gade gives us a moving and intimate picture of King Leopold. He tells in detail the King's own tragic story of Belgium's capitulation to the invaders.

"All My Born Days" has portraits and a good index. And it makes enjoyable reading.

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SERMONS FOR CRITICISM

(*Continued from page 4*)

ture is concerned, is not reducible to any rationalist panacea or scientific measure. Both, in their replies, draw parallels between the Brooks and the fascist attacks on modern art. Mr. Tate writes (italics mine):

> It is *wholly irrelevant* whether a nationalist-patriotic censorship of the imagination is set up in the interest of democracy or of totalitarianism; the results may turn out to be the same. The best defense of democracy, *or of any other political order*, in terms of the creative imagination, is no defense at all . . ."

What does this tell us about Mr. Tate? He looks on Democracy as a "political order," ignoring what Blake knew: that politics which is not religion is bad politics. He ignores that Democracy must again, rising from its Judaeo-Christian roots, become religion, in order to achieve a political order. If Democracy were part of the religion of Mr. Tate, moreover, he would understand the success of the bad religion of Fascism which has profited by just this shallowing of Democracy; and he would know that Democracy must be "defended in terms of the creative imagination," even as Dante and Milton and a hundred other masters of high literary art defended their religion.

I think we are now in a position to break down all these views, including those of Mr. Brooks, in order to isolate a common trait and failure in our critics. American imaginative literature of the past three decades has been, with the possible exception of that of "the domain of Spanish," the richest in the world. American literary criticism has been, with no major exception, the most shamefully inept. I think the analysis of these "reports" may help us to understand why.

When Mr. Brooks reads Gray's "Elegy" he can be sensitive to its art although he may not share the poet's vision of man's place in the universe; because it does not actively challenge his own. When Mr. Brooks reads "The Wasteland" (Eliot is the Thomas Gray of an age considerably more remote from Milton), he fails to see its beauties, because the meanings of every line jar against what Mr. Brooks wants the modern world to be thinking, feeling, doing. The opinions of Oliver Allston are really the religion of Van Wyck Brooks. That religion is elegiac, in that it is a moral and social humanitarianism inherited from men like Ruskin and William Morris, and grown both wistful and frantic with the events of the years. That religion is sentimental, in that it yearns for affirmation of "the good life" in forms that were already rotten-ripe in Dickens. That religion is aggressive, in that it insists on applying its mood to modern letters. That religion is incompetent, because unacknowledged and hence uncontrolled by a man who "distrusts" philosophy and who in consequence permits his esthetic judgments to be distorted by unconscious emotional reactions. Finally, that religion is dangerous, because it lacks rigorous discipline for confronting life's actual conditions (literary as well as social) . . . lacks that methodology of thoughtful action without which both religion and cultural criticism become rhetoric and betray their best intentions.

Mr. Eliot's religion, on the other hand, is theological, sacramental, pessimistic as regards earthly life, and transcendental. I don't share Mr. Eliot's religion. My own in its general human values (although not in its dimensions and methods) is closer to that of Mr. Brooks. Moreover, I am convinced that Mr. Eliot is not, by nature, more sensitive to esthetic values than Mr. Brooks. Nevertheless, Mr. Eliot is a better literary critic. Because his religion—his basic view of man and of man in the cosmos—, acknowledged and in contact with his disciplined mind, provides a firm focus and matrix, a clear if limited measure, for his literary judgments.

The other writers I have named, (excepting Mr. Tate), also possess unacknowledged religions, in some instances a good deal shallower than the humanitarian vision of Mr. Brooks. The religion of Mr. Farrell and Mr. MacDonald is so psychologically naive—seeing man as merely or chiefly a resultant of certain historic forces which are of course, themselves, resultants of inward human forces—as to be quite sterile in critical or imaginative literature. In the case of Mr. Ransom, the implicit religion is the familiar one of science-worship, the fond, decayed romanticism of facts-and-figures that came out of the prestige won by great scientists like Galileo, Kepler, Newton who would have wrathfully disclaimed it.

All these men are preaching sermons—which may surprise them, as it surprised Monsieur Jourdain to hear that he was speaking prose. Great writers of many kinds, from Isaiah to Carlyle, from Lucretius to Dostoievsky, from the poet of the Baghavad-Gitá to Racine and André Gide, have preached sermons, and known it! That is: their conscious religion, filling and fulfilling their lives, inspired, formed, fed, and justified their writings. The trouble with these writers is not that they preach sermons but that, lacking a conscious plenary vision of life, they sermonize from partial impulse, scrutinize from fragmentary knowledge: and it is usually some unacknowledged reflex, defensive, aggressive, or blind, that makes the point for them.

From sleazy convictions, from unconscious attitudes, from dogmatic loyalties to past forms, can come only critical confusion. And from the continued confusion of our critical writers, who should be the lucid priests of creative human freedom, can come . . . in whatever disguise and after whatever victory of our arms . . . only more conquests for the fascists.

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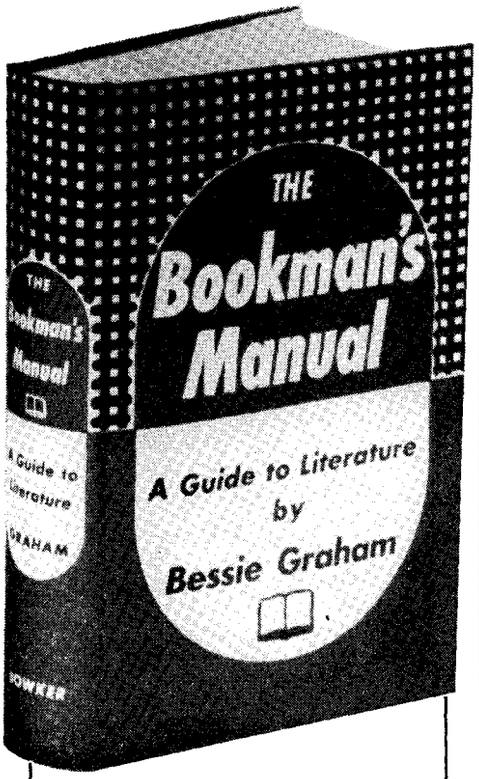

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Southwestern Story

MY ADVENTURES IN ZUNI. By Frank Hamilton Cushing. New Mexico: The Peripatetic Press. 1942. 178 *pp.* $7.50.

Reviewed by FERN MADDOX

THIS is the story, first told sixty years ago, of Frank Hamilton Cushing, who started out to investigate the Zuni Pueblo in Western Mexico. He literally "moved in," living in the pueblo, eating their food, dressing in their clothes, participating in their sports and tribal ceremonies. His account of that experience, republished in an attractive and colorful edition, to which E. DeGolyer has contributed an introduction, makes for one of the most amazing and appealing stories to come out of the Southwest.

Although to the casual observer the Zunis seem to lead a life of quiet simplicity, Cushing found a rather complex religious-social life. He stayed for four and a half years—years which found him absorbing their rituals and motivations, recording them with pencil and sketch pad. He learned to speak their "strange, clicky tongue" and he acknowledged the inseparability of the esthetic from their daily life which was at times barbaric and cruel, but maintained its own rich poetic rhythm. He found their thought patterns reflected in the "thud-thud of rattle and drum."

In their trip to Washington with Cushing, as recorded later in Sylvester Baxter's account, the Zunis proved themselves a people of charm and power even in alien territory. But the Zunis are as little changed today as is their land of mountain ranges, sagebrush and mesa. Their wit and ingenuity is as pronounced as ever.

This book was printed at the Rydal Press in Santa Fe. It is a sturdy, beautifully bound book with rich, full pages on exquisite Strathmore paper. It even seems to surpass the long series of publications which are making the Ryday Press so well thought of among collectors of Southwestern literature, artists, and men of letters.

E. DeGolyer, in resurrecting a story long dormant among the ethnologist's files, has made a distinguished contribution to regional literature.

The ceremonial masks by Fanita Lanier are painted in color. Her use of Zuni symbolism is excellent. The bindings for this limited edition are the work of Hazel Dreis.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE WEAK-EYED BAT *Margaret Millar* (Crime Club: $2.)	Lass, lover, and nurse with shadowy past perish one by one in Muskoka Lake. Psychiatrist Prye diagnoses case.	Murderer well concealed and doctor detective's methods interesting but elimination of thoroughly unpleasant trio leaves reader rather cold.	Fair
REMIND ME TO FORGET *Carolyn Byrd Dawson* (Crime Club: $2.)	Ex-wife of young Missourian suspected of slaying successor at Christmas gathering, and of second murder. Tough old sheriff cracks it.	Richly melodramatic affair with mysterious "investigator" who turns up at critical moment, autocratic old lady, and other plot-proof trappings.	High-tension
DEATH IN THE INKWELL *Jefferson Farjeon* (Bobbs, Merrill: $2.)	British crime novelist takes new secretary to lonely cottage where startling things happen.	Amusing, satirical, and frequently hair-raising yarn of author who got dangerously mixed up with his imaginary characters.	Tricky
MR. MARLOW TAKES TO RYE *John Bentley* (Houghton Mifflin: $2.)	British sleuth carries "ashes" of deceased American woman to N. Y. harbor grave and runs afoul some very nasty characters.	Daring and debonair detective thwarts vicious gangsters, samples Manhattan posh places, and out-smarts top villain in hideous English hideaway.	10-20-30
THREE BLIND MICE *Adele Seifert* (Morrow: $2.)	Violent deaths of much-married and unscrupulous St. Louis girl and one predecessor solved by Gregory Trent "laboratory technician in crime."	Detective plays agreeable second fiddle to one murderer's step-sister who gets too close to killer for her safety. Climax effective.	Feverish

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The Last "Plot"

MONTAGU NORMAN. By John Hargrave. New York: The Greystone Press. 1942. 239 *pp., with index.* $2.75.

Reviewed by PALMER HARMAN

MONTAGU NORMAN, still Governor of the Bank of England after more than twenty years in office, is a tempting subject for the "psychographer." His chin is adorned with a pointed beard. At his country place he knows how to wear a beret and discuss music and Kipling with guests. On other occasions he appears in a slouch hat with a railway ticket in the band, or a broad-brimmed affair topping off a cloak. He likes to travel incognito and once visited these shores as "Professor Skinner"—a pseudonym which some people thought a trifle too appropriate.

But these costumes and customs do not define the limits of Mr. Norman's versatility. Under the picturesque behavior is a quite unoriginal belief in the gold standard and the system of international credit which helped to make England great. In his public statements on banking matters he can use as murky, unenlightening English as any of his kind. His persuasiveness and force at the conference table, the boldness and scope of his financial plans, long ago established his prestige with the dominant people in British banking, who have no natural preference for a man who looks a little like Mephistopheles and sometimes (report says) behaves a little like Puck.

The keynote of Mr. Hargrave's lively, acid, and readable biography is a rooted disbelief in Mr. Norman as merely an orthodox, if unusually able, banker. That beard, that cloak must mean something. Mephistopheles in Mayfair, Mephistopheles at the Bank. So Mr. Norman is presented as a subtle plotter who would extend the reconstructed empire of debt over the face of Europe, perhaps of the whole world. The Bank for International Settlements, the Dawes and Young plans, the secret meetings of Norman, Parker Gilbert, Benjamin Strong, Moreau, and Schacht, were merely devices to further a gigantic scheme to fasten an outworn monetary system on a world which, in the author's view, was ripe for "social credit."

Finance is dull stuff and the biography of a financial man can only escape dullness if the author adopts an original, usually a hostile, point of view. The international schemes and conferences of the last two disastrous decades, the attempts to reconstruct Austria, save the franc, put sterling back on gold and keep it there at the cost of a ruinous deflation, in short to bring Europe back to the old system —all this looks rather futile and foolish from our present vantage point of no system at all. At the time we hung on these projects with breathless hope or mute despair.

This book is not dull. Mr. Norman, in all likelihood, is not the Napoleonic dreamer and schemer his biographer makes him out to be, but he is an apt text for a man with a theoretical axe to grind. In spite of an occasional inaccurate and unfair statement, the book presents a vivid and informing account of the twenty years twilight of the gold standard. Mr. Hargrave seems to think that the Governor is now reposing in a kind of Barbarossa's mountain, waiting to come out at the proper moment to re-establish the kingdom of debt and gold. For myself, I don't believe that the twilight will be followed by that kind of dawn.

Story of Bridges

BRIDGES AND THEIR BUILDERS. By David B. Steinman and Sara Ruth Watson. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1941. 379 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by PAUL ZUCKER

DAVID B. STEINMAN, an engineer who has built some of the most important bridges in this country, and Sara Ruth Watson, a member of a family which is now in its second generation of writing about bridges, have together produced a fascinating story in this volume. The layman who is afraid of attempting to "understand" a work on a technical subject and believes it has to be left to professionals and experts, need not be shy of it. Here he will find not only an authoritative presentation of bridges and bridge-building which touches also upon social, economic, and artistic aspects of the subject, but a real humanization, a "popularization" in the best sense.

Reading the book and glancing at its excellent illustrations, some of them photographs, some drawings, the layman will begin to realize how closely interwoven bridges are with the general history of mankind. He will become aware that the ancient Roman bridges across the Tiber river, the Old London Bridge, the Rialto of Venice, and the Ponte Vecchio of Florence, the Parisian bridges of the eighteenth century, the Firth of Forth Bridge, the Brooklyn, the George Washington, and the Golden Gate Bridge have always impressed him as documents of the respective civilizations.

This is true not only for those world-famous structures, but even for such modest need-servers as the American covered bridges, whose builders surely never thought they were creating works of art. Nevertheless, as real symbols of rustic American life in the past they have inspired more poets and thinkers than perhaps any other familiar object of our native landscape. To them has been rightly dedicated a chapter, one of the most interesting in the book.

The authors tell of the struggle with contemporary prejudices which the pioneer bridge builder had always to sustain, no less arduous than his fight against natural forces. They reveal also his more subtle difficulties in balancing various elements—economic, technical, and artistic. They finally show the modern bridge builder as mathematician and scientist. The way is indeed long from primitive bridge-building to the artistic creation of the Renaissance bridges, from the first really engineered masonry arches of the French eighteenth century bridges to the steel constructions of the Eads Bridge in St. Louis and Roebling's Brooklyn Bridge. The layman who follows the narrative to the end, will never have been lost in a maze of technical phraseology, but will have seen unfolded in specific, concrete terms the differences between beam

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bridges, cantilever bridges, and suspension bridges. He will end with the realization that the history of bridge-building is no less dramatic than that of the development of the machine or the progress of medicine.

This integrating epic by David B. Steinman and Sara Ruth Watson makes clear, and most persuasively, that new needs, new materials, new techniques demand from each generation new solutions and that in every period the master bridge-builder balances artistic vision and technical reality.

Libraries in Newark, New Jersey, are mobilizing for war. A council of public and private libraries has been formed to pool information resources for the emergency. Twelve libraries are charter members of the council, representing business concerns and public and private institutions in the city. They are the libraries of the Academy of Medicine of Northern New Jersey, Board of Education, Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company, New Jersey College of Pharmacy, New Jersey State Teachers College, Newark College of Engineering, Newark Museum, the Prudential Insurance Company, Public Service Corporation of New Jersey, St. Benedict's Preparatory School, University of Newark, and the Newark Public Library.

Records in Review

Edward Tatnall Canby

ONE of the most interesting of recent albums is that entitled "Three Deathless Songs" by Wagner, sung by Helen Traubel with the Philadelphia orchestra under Stokowski. (V M-872) Two of these were composed by Wagner in 1857 as studies for *Tristan,* and it is indeed strange to hear familiar melodies associated with quite unfamiliar poetry concerning dreams, and greenhouses. But more remarkable is Wagner's incredible ability to weave the stuff of these five-minute musical entities so deftly and surely into the stupendous web of complex sound and involved emotions that one finds in *Tristan* itself. It is characteristic of Wagner's thoroughness that these songs are in no sense incomplete sketches. Were it not for *Tristan* they might well stand on their own merits in the ranks of the deathless great songs.

★ ★

Bach's *Art of the Fugue,* long considered the ultimate example of musical mathematics, has, with our changed understanding of this subject, enjoyed a sudden popularity of late, and truly it is one of the world's great works simply as music. That Bach wrote it for no particular instrument is in no way strange, for until recent times music has not been the slave of instrumentation. Bach's four melodic lines may be played on a variety of instruments, and has been performed recently in versions for orchestra, two pianos, string quartet. E. Power Biggs has done his best work to date in a recording for Baroque organ of this work (V M-832, 833). Interested listeners would do well to try also the version for string quartet recorded for Columbia by the Roth Quartet. On March 29 the New Friends of Music Orchestra will perform in New York the Stiedry orchestral version.

★ ★

A fine modern work for the beginner is Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler,* recorded by Ormandy and the Philadelphia (V M-854). This symphony, derived from an opera based on the life of the sixteenth century Mathis Grünewald, interprets three of Mathis's paintings. Hindemith's harmonic idiom is modern, but much of his technique, notably his use of easily recognizable themes, is of a sort familiar to the average listener. Nor does he shun the expression of emotion in the familiar manner. His careful use of material is akin to Brahms, and perhaps is open to the same criticism—an occasional whiff of the lamp, hardly to be taken seriously, but none the less present.

★ ★

A work unlike any other is the delicately perfumed, infinitely sincere *Requiem* of Gabriel Fauré. Taken as a whole it is monotonous, repetitious, artificial, yet there is a fascination that does not wear out. Try, for example, the haunting *Agnus Dei* with its melody for the tenors over a beautiful flowing orchestral countersubject. *Les Disciples de Massenet* and the Montreal Festivals Orchestra do a fine job in Victor M-844. . . . There is nobody who can beat Koussevitsky at playing Sibelius, and so his recording of *Tapiola* (V M-848) should sell like wildfire. The truth will out: the work leaves me utterly cold. I cannot myself see Sibelius as a great composer, but have no desire to interfere with them as thinks different. . . . Bruno Walter is continuing for Columbia in this country a series of recordings which extends back for a decade or so and includes some of our finest albums. A minor but excellent album is Smetana's familiar *Vltava* (The Moldau), with the New York Philharmonic (C X-211).

★ ★

Edna St. Vincent Millay has recorded an album of her own poetry (V M-836) which should be of great significance, but which proves to me simply that there is something psychologically impossible about such recordings. Even an ardent Millayite friend condemned these records after a side or so—yet the voice is after all Millay's, authentic. The whole matter of poetry reading is fraught with enough difficulties without the addition of what might be called the microphone lisp. Yet as historical records these will be of value.

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TRADE WINDS

Editor's Note: With this issue, Bennett Cerf joins the Family as Trade Winds *columnist. Mr. Cerf confesses to having started Modern Library, Random House, and sundry other institutions. From this point on, he is on his own.*

I DON'T know how Walter Winchell, F. P. A., or Leonard Lyons ever drifted into writing columns, but it was all very simple in my case. The phone rang; it was the editor of the *Review.* Would I do *Trade Winds?* Like lightning, all my eminent disqualifications for the job flashed through my mind, and I accepted.

MY WIFE and my partners at Random House who have little respect for my diplomacy and tact, are convinced that within a month I will have offended half of the publishing world, and that the *Review* will be working frantically on some formula to get me out of here. The fact that I am a publisher myself may induce some of my confrères to view this new activity with, shall we say, a jaundiced eye. I will have to be pretty careful not to talk too much about home products. And I don't know how closely I'll be able to stick to the subject of book business. The editors assure me, however, that I can roam occasionally into the realm of the theatre and motion pictures, and that contributors will send in pieces once in a while to help out. They did for Chris Morley!

I won't get around to all the publishers' offices as much as I should, but I read *Publishers' Weekly, Variety,* most of the daily columns, and the *Hollywood Reporter.* And I own scissors and paste pot!

I offer this brief report before beginning. . . .

ONE OF THE truly great books stemming from the present war, John Steinbeck's novel, "The Moon Is Down," is scheduled for March publication, and distribution by the Book-of-the-Month Club in April. It is a heartening and magnificent story of Norwegian resistance to Nazi conquerors. Harry Carey and Otto Kruger will play the leads in the stage version, which will reach the boards almost as soon as the publication of the book. Harold Guinzburg, head of the Viking Press, is quietly offering bets that the book will sell a full half million copies, with surprisingly few takers. This by way, probably, of substantiation of his statement to the *Publishers' Weekly* that, since he has accepted a full-time job with the Foreign Information Service Division of the C.O.I., under Robert Sherwood, he has discovered how unnecessary the president of a publishing firm is to its well-being. Several rival P's temporarily taken aback by this revolutionary statement, find comfort in the thought that that's all very well when you have a Ben Huebsch to take care of the family. Huebsch has forgotten more about publishing than a half dozen young squirts, including the writer, will ever know.

THAT HOARY and persistent myth that city slickers—particularly New Yorkers—are more sophisticated and more immune to grade-A hokum than their country cousins, takes an awful kicking around these nights at "Angel Street," one of the few dramatic smashes of a dolorous Broadway season. This is a cozy little study of a murderer who is slowly and deliberately driving his bride mad. The other evening a fashionable Manhattan audience shouted a warning to a careless detective who left his hat in plain view on a table, and hissed with gusto when the villain made his third-act entrance. One of the more vociferous members of the audience, seated directly in front of me, was the old town-crier, Alexander Woollcott, who was so moved by the proceedings that he sent the management a letter of praise the next morning. This is equivalent to a nod from Queen Victoria in a more serene era.

RECORDS of publishers and motion-picture studios alike prove that there is no set rule at all for what either city or country folk will accept. Many a manuscript that was accepted for purely prestige purposes has swept the country and, by the same token, many a production that was rated a sure-fire boob-catcher has laid a horrendous egg. I hear that the screen version of "How Green Was My Valley," expected to draw a blank in the small towns, actually will be the biggest grosser of the year for Twentieth Century-Fox. The phony ending that Alfred Hitchcock was high-pressured into tacking onto "Suspicion" ("Before the Fact" in book form) was attacked as bitterly by the populace of Skowhegan as by Bosley Crowther of the *New York Times.*

THE MAY Book-of-the-Month Club choice is "The Making of Tomorrow" by Raoul de Roussy de Sales. The Literary Guild will distribute Elliot Paul's "The Last Time I Saw Paris." The Nazis cannot stop us from thinking about April in Paris anyhow! . . . Carl Sandburg was heard to advise a young bachelor friend recently, "Be sure to choose a Texas girl when you marry. Then you'll know that whatever may happen, *she's seen worse!*" . . . The startling parallel between recent doings on the Russian front and Napoleon's retreat from Moscow has boomed sales of Tolstoy's epic, "War and Peace," to best-seller proportions. A new edition, with maps and illustrations, is in the offing. Meanwhile it is available in at least two reprint editions . . . And cheering news from Pocket Books tells that over 400,000 copies of the twenty-five-cent edition of Douglas Miller's "You Can't Do Business with Hitler" have been sold within a few weeks. This is a good book to press on disgruntled friends who seem bent on enlarging on the traditional perfidy of Britain, or the future menace of a victorious Russia, or the even more dangerous thesis that "I'd just as soon buy my rubber and tin from the Japs as from a Dutch cartel." These compact editions fit big mouths as well as small pockets.

This doesn't seem difficult at all! ! !

BENNETT CERF.

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GEORGE W. LYON is an old Double-Crosticker. Five years ago he suggested to Professor William Lyon Phelps the use of our puzzles to supplant the present "silly intelligence tests devised by the psychology professors."

Be that as it may, his travel afield with *Chichevache* warms the cockles of my heart:

"In a way, I admire those rugged individuals and resolute souls who solve Double-Crostics without benefit of book, Bible or Webster. I was once of their class, and have solved them that way—but no more. My mental stamina is such that I could do it again, if marooned on an island at sea. Logic at last came to my assistance, thus: Here is a case where both the *direct* proposition and the converse are true, to wit: If it does not weaken Mrs. Kingsley's mental fiber to consult reference books in making out these puzzles, it will not weaken mine in getting the same help for the solution. I am glad to know that Mrs. Kingsley takes this view of the matter.

"By no means the least cultural value in solving these Double-Crostics is learning to use reference books quickly and efficiently, a process which enables one to gain much additional interesting information in the course of the solution. Let me illustrate: In the D—C, No. 41C, Jan. 30, '42, the first word is defined thus: (A) 'Fabulous lean medieval monster who fed on patient wives.' When I had found the first three letters of this word, 'C-H-I,' I turned to Brewer's 'Dictionary of Phrase and Fable' (a good book for you puzzlers, by the way) and on page 245 I found the following entry:

"*Chichevache** (3 syl.) French for the 'sorry cow,' a monster that lived only on good women—all skin and bone, because its food was so *extremely scarce.* (Remember, good women, this is Rev. Brewer and not I.) The old English romancers invented another monster, which they called Bicorn, as fat as the other was lean; but, luckily, he had for food 'good and enduring husbands,' of which there is no lack. (*See* BICORN.)

O noble wyves, ful of heigh prudence,
Let noon humilitie your tongues nayle;
Ne lat no clerk have cause or diligence
To write of you a story of such mervayle
As of Griseldes, pacient and kynde,
Lest Chichi-vache you swolwe in hir entraile.

—Chaucer: *L'Envoye de Chaucer,* V. 9-64

"Now, the point I want to make is just this: had I been a resolute soul, refusing benefit of book, I would have

*The French *chiche-face* means "thin face." Lydgate wrote a poem entitled "Bycorne and Chichevache."

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missed all this interesting information as given by Brewer: the reference to Bicorn, the selection from Chaucer, and the literal meaning of the French in both *Chichevache* and *chiche-face*. Yes, use reference books freely and profit by the additional information gained thereby."

Betsy Toms, writer of the following, is secretary to Geoffrey Parsons, chief editorial writer of the *New York Herald Tribune*. He, too, is a fan. When I met him a few years ago in his sanctum he greeted me with, "Where did you get that word 'Serendipity' in a recent Double-Crostic?" Heartening, wasn't it, to us mortals who think we have an inferiority complex if we don't know all the words in a puzzle?

Miss Toms says:

"In our circle, anyone who would use reference books for a Double-Crostic, except in *extremis*, would be greeted with most disapproving looks. Of course, when a puzzle is done, one might look up a word like 'theetsee' to see if it's completely fictionary. But the only thing that causes eyebrow-raising is something like 'outish'* (Now I ask you. . . . (Still and all, we don't really mind them, either. We can make up words, too) that isn't even in our dictionary."

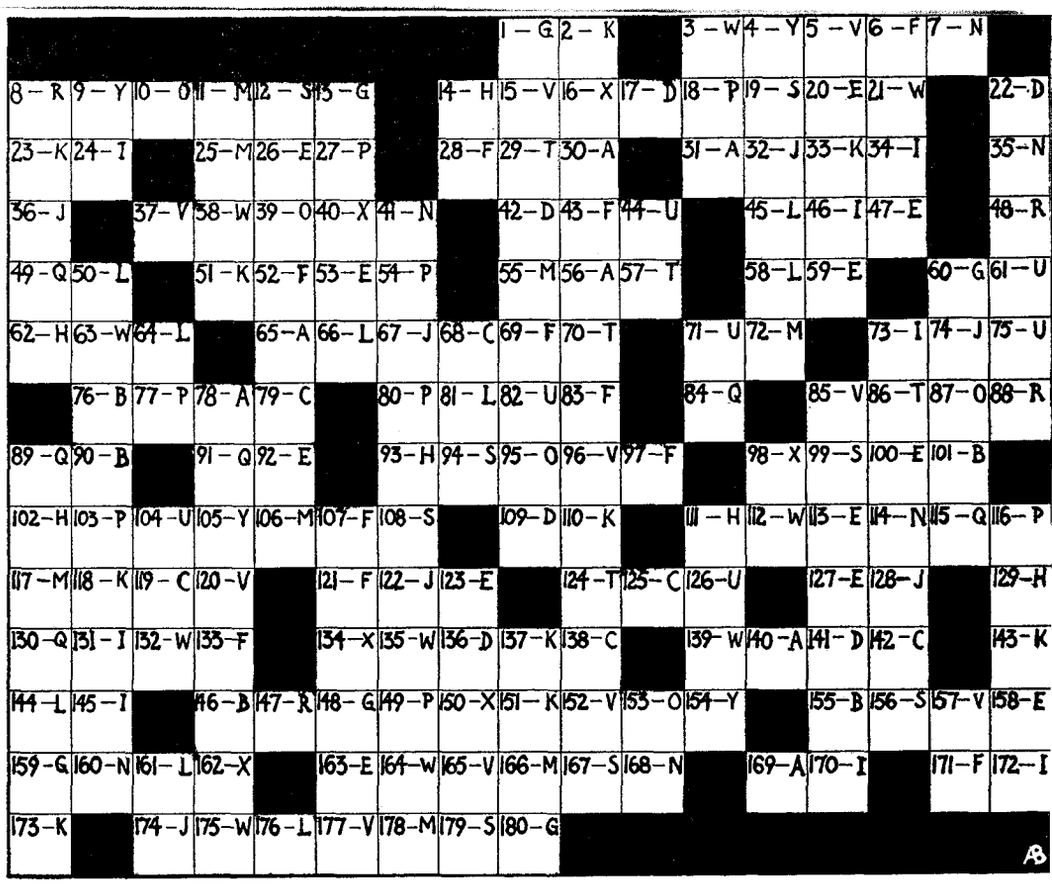
You find me using words like *outish, otherset,* a *aether, Esther* and such, to use up *h's* and as few vowels as possible in words beginning with *e, n, o.* Words beginning with these vowels are scarcer except as they contain a disproportiate number of vowels which I can't spare. So I sacrifice them to mediocrity and to give you familiar pegs.

E. S. K.

*Ed.: *Outish*, W.N.I. 1940, pg. 1733, out of the way; eccentric.

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Longfellow: The Courtship of Miles Standish.
2. Shakespeare: Two Gentlemen of Verona.
3. François Villon: Ballad of Dead Ladies.
4. Browning: Memorabilia.
5. Southey: The Cataract of Lodore.
6. Keats: La Belle Dame Sans Merci.
7. Owen Meredith: Lucile.
8. Elizabeth Barrett Browning: A Musical Instrument.
9. Austin Dobson: A Kiss.
10. Jane Taylor: My Mother.
11. Dryden: A Song for St. Cecelia's Day.
12. Thomas Moore: The Last Rose of Summer.
13. Edward Lear: The Akond of Swat.
14. John Trumbull: McFingal.
15. Francis Scott Key: The Star Spangled Banner.
16. Abraham Cowley: The Motto.
17. Amy Lowell: Patterns.
18. Wordsworth: Resolution and Independence.
19. Scott: The Lay of the Last Minstrel.
20. W. S. Gilbert: The Mikado.



Double-Crostics: No. 414

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 12 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. To reprimand severely, loudly (U. S. slang; 2 wds.)

B. Half-rotten (as wood).

C. Birthplace of the Prophet Nahum.

D. Pertaining to a road, a journey, or traveling.

E. At the end of one's means (a phrase).

F. The veery (2 wds.)

G. To call to witness.

H. A showy trifle.

I. English seat of a coöperative market scheme (1844).

J. Posted up; paraded; advertised (often in a derogatory sense; Fr.)

K. Softening.

L. Empty imaginings; nonsense.

M. Characterizing a perfect order or arrangement (comp.)

N. Liberator and King of Scotland (with *I.*; 1306-29).

O. An insect in its final adult state before birth.

P. Giggling.

Q. Ancient or antique.

R. A merganser of Northern Europe and Asia.

S. Digitalis genus (pharm.)

T. Father of King Arthur.

U. He led a colony from Jerusalem to America about B.C. 600 (B'k of Mormon).

V. Shameless boldness.

W. Famous European banking house.

X. Said of an anchor clear, perpendicular, ready for sailing (naut.)

Y. A springy motion or movement.

WORDS

65 140 31 78 30 56 169

101 155 76 146 90

142 119 79 68 125 138

141 136 22 42 109 17

127 59 100 47 123 92 20 113 163 26 158 53

121 6 28 107 97 171 43 69 52 133 83

148 1 180 13 60 159

93 111 102 14 62 129

131 170 73 172 24 46 34 145

74 67 128 32 174 122 36

51 151 118 33 173 110 137 2 23 143

45 58 50 176 64 144 81 161 66

117 11 55 25 72 166 106 178

7 160 35 114 168 41

87 10 153 39 95

77 54 80 116 149 27 18 103

89 130 84 49 91 115

8 147 88 48

19 94 179 108 12 99 156 167

124 57 29 70 86

75 44 61 71 104 82 126

157 85 96 37 165 152 177 5 15 120

164 175 63 139 112 3 135 38 21 132

16 134 162 150 98 40

154 9 4 105

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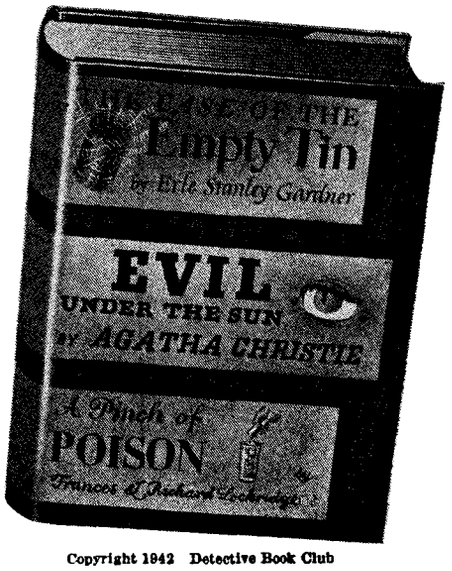

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